

I am a small and orphaned bird

Matthew Aksamit

And when he finishes inside me
I think of you feeding me as a child,
Mama, and my throat swells,
heavy with the weight of all my grief.
The contrast could not be starker,
the antonym not more pronounced,
as I lay there,
drunk and high and fantasizing about cutting up the fruit in my fridge –
surely, I am old enough now to do it myself,
and if not, then I suppose I will starve.

~

Do you want to know how it felt?

Okay, then I will tell you.

I felt nothing.

I was fucked raw by some country guy off Grindr while woefully inebriated and when he finally came, I felt nothing.

I didn't feel the closeness I longed for, the intimacy,

and I didn't feel agonizing betrayal.

I couldn't even feel how mundane and sad it was.

The pain came later, as it always does, because after all,

the press of a finger on a bruise will cause it to bloom once more.

~

I know better than to ask for your comfort,
know better than to expect you to hold me.

And yet here I am,
screaming your name in desperation.

(All that comes out are curses at god).

Perhaps this is what they mean in the Bible when they talk about original sin -
the sickness on your hands has stained me like ink and I cannot wash it off,
not in the shower or
in the rain or
the ocean or
the sweat of a man I barely know.

It stains me and everything I touch and so I cut off my hands,
screwed the blade of a sharpener the same way I used to as a child and hacked
them off,
in slow, agonizing bliss.

~

I wanted fruit but the only thing on the cutting board that can satisfy me is my
own skin.

I wanted you but know enough about tying knots to see what a frayed rope
looks like.