

Photographs

by Julia Retkova

Our car is still weeks from being hit.

Meanwhile, I make you dishes warm with spices,
Meanwhile, I feel safer with your back pressed to mine.

That day you looked like a stranger.
Something building a nest in your throat, chest,
the words came out different.
Sometimes, I think *these are not yours at all*.

That day, I dreamt of his eyes, empty,
brimming over with seawater:
all to wake up to a room
flooded pink in sunlight. I
would weave stories all day. Thinking back on all that uncurls.
The days crowded with your scent of honey and burning amber.
Our faces fading and fading and— all gathered in the photographs hung up by the door.

Maybe all the stories we told them will someday taste like honey
maybe they will sound soft, and quiet, and kind,
and maybe years from now,
the things you whispered into the crook of my neck would still survive.