

Kestrel

May It Be a Blessing

I give myself names like sour plums.
They sit in my mouth until my tongue
is bare and soft as the underside
of my arm. I can lift this tongue
to speak, to call myself out:
Neuropathway and Midriff, Plump
Upper lip, Crooked. I am these things
and more, I wear my hair cut straight
across my forehead and even
in the rain, it stays there,
line of the horizon and me with every
word a name I'll call myself. How long
did my mother wait to speak me into something,
noun of my existence like the most common
house sparrow. How caged, my name,
feminine. We respect our names in these
parts, how they harken biblical, dissolve us
into a line of names. My name is gone,
purple. I give myself a shadow name:
Farce and Pickle. Name like Holy Water:
Baptism. My name is.