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On Hollowness And Translucence And Killing My Daughter
By: Khawla Fentis

Butterfly hair clips and plastic Barbie dolls.
Pop music and pink shoes and lockable diaries.
My childhood was that of girliness and porcelain.
Clear-cut movies and books with pictures
And crystalline dreams of a perfect husband.

Everything was glass,
Hollow and translucent.
Barbie loved Ken.
Ken loved Barbie.

Ken loved bleach-blond hair and thigh gaps.
Ken liked baby eyes and manicures.
Ken liked makeup and colors and quiet girls.
Ken wanted vulnerability and plastic.
Ken liked hollowness and translucence.

Barbie liked muscles and surfboards and strong guys.
Barbie liked six feet of protection and pride.
Barbie wanted to be vulnerable and plastic.
She found hollowness and translucence.

Everything was glass,
Vulnerable and plastic.
Beauty was in magazines and music videos
And thigh gaps and blond hair
And makeup and colors
And muscles and surfboards,
But not in me.

Charcoal black curls and olive skin.
Curves and bitten nails and nervously shy.
Already tongue-tied and tattooed with insecurity
And self-consciousness that lasted into teenage years.
Worried that boys wouldn't like darker complexions and natural frizz.
Agitated that not enough bones were set in place.
Visible bones were a sign of hollowness.
As if beauty depended on the opinion of boys who wanted vulnerability.
I wanted to be hollowness and translucence.

I shattered like glass.
I remained empty and hollow and vulnerable.
Perfection was in every plastic bleach-blond Barbie and her thigh gaps.

Watching for slimness and hollowness and a false beauty.

My daughter should know how fullness is beauty.

How sustaining a life in oneself is beauty.

How sustaining her in myself is beauty.

How she is beautiful.