

SUPRALITTORAL

There is a deep throbbing in this shell, reverberating from the cloudspires. In searching for it I am thrown far down beyond the mantle.

Then Atticus pulled me from the depths, out of the vacuum. He wedged a finger in my throat, clearing it of sediment. I writhe on the wet grey sand, choking up air. He expelled breath to my pale skin, igniting my nerves. My lungs fill with his warmth.

Behind translucent skin, his heart beats once an hour, shattering the air. Low shrubs and leafy growths have long since retreated into the ashy soil. Shards and fractals pierce my skin; he picks them out and sucks the ooze from my wounds.

But he will always fulfill his promise as cold morning sunlight crawls across the zenith - I am only a second of his time. Every hour, he reaps the porous valley, pulling leafy limbs from their holes. When the soil has been harvested, he cradles the blood-filled bluebell, a burden to its straining stem.

I climb the rungs of Atticus. I tangle myself in his aorta; there is a deep throbbing in this shell, reverberating with each beat of the heart. I will return to it every time it rings out.

He towers above this desolate plain. If the road is cold, I shelter in his chest cavity. All the while, he cradles the bluebell, searching the cold expanse for movement. The little plants return his stare; there is no hiding above the current.

EPIPELAGIC

The silver sun has settled underneath the horizon, sending a wave of darkness washing over. I hover by the water, foot poised to dip. But Atticus calls out, a generous anger that folds the flora into their shells. His hand envelops me, we once again arrive face to face; an exhale nearly blows my body from the ether. One hand still cradles the bluebell, veins pulsing angrily in each petal.

Still, the water coaxes me from below. Atticus drops me to the lake surface, submerging my entire head in the dark pool.

My skin burns as I fold through the water seams. Pearly fish briefly regard me with a similar wide eye before dipping back through ocean ribbons, a thick, black cloud that sucks at the thighs of Atticus as if it wishes to pull him deeper into the nothing.

I am geysered from the water, elevated to his eye pedestal, the tip of his nail wiping stray droplets out of raw tear ducts. He kisses my head and places me on his sixth rib to dry. The tower has gone opaque, and I am lulled to sleep in the hull of Atticus.