

Trauma as “the bedrock of hysteria”

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i am teaching my body you are not a threat
not every man is a minefield
i must be wary of
balancing on a ledge with my delirium
the way the moon dips its toes into the pale blue

i am unsure who taught me
to medicalize the violence
with its starving, sticky tendrils
around my tendons
i know when trauma blooms inside me and my blood boils
you do not degrade me
for not being saccharine

i am done being the sacramental bread
for the dull teeth of men
who are half eulogy
who cannot keep themselves full

i am working on integrating the fractured parts of me
howl
caught in my throat
mouth full of cherry laughter
my body as a vessel for shame
and solace
and thrills

i am more than coral skin
and accidents

i am a vastness

Ellie Lamothe is a sociology student at Mount Saint Vincent University, an activist, a poet, and the founding editor of *Laurels & Bells Literary Journal*. She’s passionate about feminism, collective healing, and working to end gender-based violence. Her poetry has appeared in *Glass: A Journal of Poetry* (Poets Resist), *Yes Poetry*, and *Ghost City Review*.