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Palimpsest

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Palimpsest

Can you imagine plucking words one-by-one off the page like hairs off your head? It's an arduous process, yes, but once you're beyond the rift and into the hypnosis, the act feels eerily meditative. You become the instincts you sell yourself to; you drain your soul into the unconscious process and become the hum of the fan screaming to itself in the background. Sometimes you forget the fan is there. It won't be until tonight that you examine the papercuts on your fingers that had been there all along, replacing the ink; tiny wounds hardly present themselves, you will ponder. You will ponder.

You can't tell if the sun has hidden. Scraping away modifiers has become a relentless pursuit for something insatiable. If you're empty, you think, then you can be free. Labels, nametags, price tags, scars, carved words. But tomorrow is time to start again. You will scour a dictionary to find all the jewels to decorate yourself. One page won't be enough. Nor will one book; you'll amass libraries by two months' time. It still won't be enough. Rivers of affirmations and deluges of letters and numbers will etch themselves into you, formulating your sense of purpose until, at last, I'll be alive. I'll know myself.

This is why the paint scraper is your companion now—the extension of your internal reach—and why you trust it with your life. It's already evening, but you don't know that. There are fifteen more pages, but your circadian clock doesn't understand that. All that exists is the now and the relapse and the release and the process and the meditation and the mediation and the reward. Thoughts disguised as white noise that make hazy forms in the corners of your eyes. So you also don't know that you'll do this again seven more times before you die. You'll copy and paste, cut out and reform, define and redefine, every inch of your life until the horizon is reached. And when that happens, oh won't that be a happy day.

CLAIRE KATSION