

BROTHER WITH RUPTURE

Matthew Gellman

Twin hornets, you and I raced the living room, playing our game of chase until you tumbled jumping the back of the armchair, your left leg snapping on the carpet, the ligament swarming with purple, the shin splitting off from the thigh. The cast was chronic for a season, jagged rainbows scribbled onto it, affirmations, stick-figure flowers and the names of the kids in our class at school. The same boys who would later spit on my cheek and throw me onto the blacktop, looming, the shadows of hemlocks erasing their steps as they turn to go. I learned to seek refuge in the tough Pennsylvania field, yellow weed and spurge, in the black apprehensions of geese as they skimmed the pond, not accusing or unkind. You learned to recover, dragging your shell of a calf through the den, wringing your hands, encircled by a tentative light that will always return me to injury. *Hey*, you call to me from a leaf-pile, healed, October simmering behind you, *You bury me first and then you let me bury you.*