

Guilt

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Guilt—never died on August 3, 2017. I hired a hit man to use a missile. But guilt still lies in a heap on my chest at night like a pile of frozen pigeons. Last month, my father fell again and I walked through him for the third time. They told me he was trying to run away and tripped. Another brain bleed. We moved him upstairs to memory care, as if strangers could somehow care for his memory. When I visited him, no one could find him. We opened one door after another, the square-tipped smells of each person rushed out. We found him in someone else's bed, hair buzzing. He handed me his glasses and said, *here's my future*. And all I could think was, *what would my dead mother do?* I went from room to room looking for her. All I found were dismembered shadows and bodies in a C-shape, heads emptied out. I could hear all of the hearts beating in the dark. The problem was they all sounded the same. My own heart slowed. Guilt had turned into a heart too, mixed in the pile, breeding with all the other hearts.