

To the houses on the mountains that surround Las Vegas,

Jade Darr

I first glimpsed you from the backseat of a rental car
As I lowered my frail teenage body to sleep.
Someday I'll face death like that: jet-lagged from the trip
across dimensions. I plugged headphones into the night
to distill it: *why must I cry in such beautiful places?*
I'll still do anything to reduce my grief to inconvenience -
cut a path up the rock face until I strike the desert sky's
bedrock of silence. Each night these mountains
bear the constellations of living room televisions flashing,
those blue and white flames crackling within glass dens.
Now I have run out of my own dreams
but I reach back to that night where paradise
was making a case for itself: one day I would be living
among you, inhabiting a low star, cracking a window
to midnight's pure stillness, then fumbling for car keys
to leave all these dream homes to dream.
Now I am driving away from you lowering my windows,
I am bathing my face in the cool night wind
that my beat-up car swallows ferociously,
its headlights carving a bright dying glacier
down the mountain. I am not a shooting star,
but make a wish on me anyway. A long time ago
I was desperate for something like you to exist.

- Jade Darr



Photograph by Jade Darr