

Intruders

If I let them in, I would finish the pint of ice cream.

I would tell my sister to leave her boyfriend, ask Mrs. Harmon if I am a good enough writer, and tell him, unabashedly, just how much I crave his touch.

Maybe, I would live near the ocean or in a big city.

Maybe, I would buy a motorcycle or leave the candles burning.

I would give more compliments and ask more questions—
and maybe I would be honest.

I could scream at the top of my lungs, throw my laptop across the room, and pound my fists against the wall until the bones in my fingers were the size of breadcrumbs.

Maybe, I would tie bricks to my feet and jump into the deep end, or send her that dusty email.

Ask to hold a stranger's baby—

hug everyone I've always wanted to hug—

I would not mumble, no, I would speak with my entire chest—

I would cry more, but I would fall in love less—

I would kiss my friends and hold their hands and have more sleepovers.

If I let them in, maybe I would become softer—big and mushy—

or learn to lean into the depths of my soul—listen to the whispers in my body that speak too softly for the world to hear.