

Afternoon at the Bigfoot Discovery Museum

Highway 9 was closed so Hunter parked
his car on the shoulder and we all walked there,
to Felton, the word *half-moon* carved three times
in the moss on the Jersey barrier. We laughed
about the theories of the earth: how the world
has been thought an egg, or hollow, or flat.

When we got to the museum there was a talk
on the types of Bigfoot sightings:
mythical, paranormal, biological.

Apparently, there's evidence all over the forests
of the West Coast: hair, teeth, anomalous screams.

*But every dark shadow in the woods
is a Bigfoot nowadays,* grumbles Mike,
who owns the museum and knows
it might go out of business soon.

Mike, the Stanford graduate, who put his savings
into this two-room museum, stands behind a counter
answering questions fifty weeks out of the year.

He's been here for eleven years
and has been insulted, threatened, cursed,
rocks and bottles thrown through his windows.

It's five o'clock and I am heartbroken
at the Bigfoot Discovery Museum.
This isn't the poem I thought I'd write.

I don't disgrace the man for his passion—
I only wish I could believe the way Mike does;
to have that kind of faith in anything
would be a miracle no one would be able to disprove.

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Dear I Can't Believe It's Not Butter [Letter #2]

You're still in the back of my fridge, lonely as God. This is how we're similar: at times we've resigned to let the heat of this world ruin us, we may or may not be genetically modified, we've both been judged based on what we are not. I know it doesn't matter: you don't care that I'm composed of fistfuls of carbon, just like it doesn't bother me that you consist of soybean oil and salt. I'm writing to let you know that I'm still moved by beauty in unexpected places. Last year I went to an orchestra performance in a room filled with wires. When the violinists finished playing their instruments, they started to play the wire, a single note—held it, then cut the wire, which released one final sound. I cried in that audience of strangers. I've never attended a house of worship but seek grace in all things. I take 8 vitamins every day. I'm 25 and have entered a phase of life that has not always been filled with the delight I feel when I gaze upon you, my savory substitute, leaning against a jar of expired pickles like a stoic. Dear Not-Butter, I can't claim to know how old you are but I'm glad to know you all the same. My imaginary dairy. My condiment of imitation. My simulacrum of joy.

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Reading Cavafy by Candlelight

The storm we've been fearing hit tonight;
it brought down redwoods and power lines
and half a mile away, a transformer exploded,
sending up blue sparks bright as fallen stars.

I'm glad to live with you here, in these mountains,
even though awful things have happened—
when that car flipped and littered the road with glass,

when the sky was filled with smoke all November,
when you were so sick, the state of California called
and I drove you to urgent care for intravenous fluids.

Now, this storm threatens to flood
our small apartment, and there's nothing to do
but wait on the couch with you in the dark.

This must be what straight couples
think of when they're told *for better or worse*.

We haven't talked about marriage
but next month marks five years together,
a length of time that once seemed impossible.

Who am I without you in my life?
The answer, like a burning wick.
I love you with all my insufficient words.

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