

ST. ELMO'S FIRE
MICHAEL CHANG

"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do."—Romans 7:15

"What you WANNA do is not necessarily what you're GONNA do"—Gia Gunn, RuPaul's Drag Race

House of cards & boarding-school hijinks w/ the squash recruit
 Conquistador w/ new territory to explore tattered charts sprawled unabashedly
 on the floor Eye candy an alien rush, fish on a bicycle The sea recoiling, hissing
 THE DINER, our spot banquette emerald, pristine, comforting cheeseburgers,
 onion rings & gin-splashed Shirleys Temple I lick grease off his fingers
 Parasite & host shaved down truffle dust of pure desire Kamala said we don't compare
 struggle But at this moment I need him very badly finally he says *Let's get outta here*
 THE ROOM, sequestered like heretics He turns, back displayed Unexpected muscles jutting
 out not impolitely (meaning welcome) He tells me about his time in Australia, where
 they say "rooted" instead of fucked Rooted cherry tree, berries tumbling Gravity
 the only thing keeping me grounded I want to be the koala perched on his bare chest
 We'd take a beautiful nap together I step closer His face lifts, eyes flaring in recognition

I study his Nantucket red (flattering & freshly-laundered & pressed & the right length & not too
snug) windswept hair (you know, the kind that falls just so) bare feet wincing, skin so white
it's translucent smooth muscle everywhere hands sleek, promising calligraphy I am ripe,
imagining sticky blooms on my stomach—; anything to fix this profound loneliness
THE ACT, pleading: *My mouth wants to be wrapped around you* He slides his tongue
to draw mine out drumstick luring crab Soon, shirts strewn, skin caught in carbin
& calipers We become amateur philosophers of the body, of unspoken
devastation—; He holds me tenderly, carrying me in the private cave of his mouth
His smoothness rapt at briny attention I am a urinal, fly imagery on
porcelain something to aim at I was nothing before he invented me I am afflicted w/ a
blindness only he can cure I could burst out of myself, look down at my body A deep
breath out, a sigh of relief I am the thing sloshing in his mouth foam white runoff in a cup
red wire blue wire either way, everything blows up Nakatomi Plaza snickerdoodle
hurt on my lips THE BEGINNING, says: *I wanna be your hedgehog* Smirking,
massaging his brow, says: *What does that even mean* smiling, touching his chest
(the way boys do) *you can't put any of' words together & expect them to mean something*
I say: *Yes I can* Babe *Daz poetry*