

**“Diaspora #1” by [Khalypso](#)**

my joy is a dead language.  
cherubs sob when i pass them by  
as if my fingers carry the wilt  
of baby’s breath. i lie in bed & suddenly  
i’m closer to my ghosts.  
another boy tells me he loves me &  
i cannot look him in the eye. another  
mother says, “smile, child,” & the clouds  
open up to swallow me whole.

the last time i loved, the words died in my belly.  
the sparks quit next, & then the boy.  
i say i cannot carry another day & the shadows  
rejoice. i say i’m going to love me today  
& i can hear laughter.

worry about me. i am not well. a child  
has gone missing within me & left  
not even detritus. all the things in this world  
set to kill me encroach upon  
the one smile i can offer a new day.  
i have said it once & if i do not say  
it again, the tigers clawing the insides  
of my brain will never sleep: home is nowhere  
when you are a stolen thing. an heirloom of haint  
& hate.

