

"Everyone I Love is Drafting Their Own Eulogies" by Ruth Madievsky

in parking lots, in bedrooms,
in supermarkets between the ground beef
and the egg noodles. Let's try that again:
so much comes down to a body
handcuffing itself to its ghost.
I want to tell you about the time
the past was an earring
under the bed. How I lived
in the space between touching
and not touching, how I wanted
everyone I love
to wear me like a hat. Now I'm the darkness
a city bus moves through,
but not always, not when I pass someone
walking more than three dogs,
not when everyone I love
is working full-time as my lungs.
In Los Angeles, someone's replaced
all the oxygen with surgical grade stainless steel,
someone's tagged all the freeway overpasses
and I can't tell if they wrote *HELEN*
or *HELP*. Everyone I love is trying
to shine me like a flashlight,
everyone I love is telling me
to say ahh. In my backyard, forty ants
are sharing a slice of watermelon,
and I don't know why that makes me feel
lonely, why I wish I was their size
and with them, fighting for the juiciest piece
with everyone I love
or just letting them have it.