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Drawing 101

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DRAWING 101

KATIE MARTEL

hands smudged charcoal black, i rubbed
his face out on the page and began again
to draw a circle and a line to denote
the sunken shape of his body frame.
looking up i realized the line looked
nothing like his figure.

i ripped out the page.

i should know this body, this mind
so tightly woven into mine, i should grasp
his emotion laden bones, muscles, skin, hidden
under a layer of clothing. i should touch
and feel the body beneath all that and then
draw with this hand upon this page.

i blotted out another botched form and looked at him.
“i can’t draw, i’m a poet not an artist.” he smiled and i drew
his face with words, the shade underneath his brown eyes.
hidden under ridged eyebrows and settled in this face
i cannot fail to grasp the essence of their being;

so brown.

somewhere between the crown and the chin i find
him hiding, and almost done i can’t decide if it is poetry
or charcoal.

and his head is hung in shadows and deep, dark
lines of thought and disquietude. his lips and teeth and tongue
hide somewhere beneath his nose. and the shadows.
i cannot forgo the many suggestions of deep slumber.
i long to hide in them on bright, burning days.