

Essay

The Trapeze Dress

Karla Pahel | Issue 122

IT WAS DURING HOLY WEEK last year when E, wearing her fake Gucci butterfly necklace, tried to light herself on fire. A garland of woodland rabbits was strung across the doorway of our kitchen. Jelly bean prayers and Mardi Gras beads were scattered across our table. And the pills—lithium, Abilify, Geodon, and the pill to give when my daughter is completely out of control, the pill to give instead of calling the police, began to resemble the colored tablets from egg-dyeing kits that fizz in vinegar water. I read that Seamus Heaney wrote only poems of lightness at the end of his life. I yearned for this lightness, and so began my search for a trapeze dress.

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