


 KRISTIN CHANG

## Ode to intestines

you half -assed rope my tongue slurs a noose of today  
 I refused to eat you in all forms: sorrowed soft scoured  
 shitless the pig that birthed you in one hot knot  
 of scarves island shallow in my stew of skulls my mouth gropes  
 gutblood tendon slender as a hook my teeth  
 tender as steam for years I thought bowels were a breed  
 of bird & *bowel movement* a migration of silver wings  
 a climate sought in the south of me my stomach dislodges  
 like a spacecraft unloads its bones on another planet  
 where my mother's nickname is not *vulture* where  
 her tongue does not pander oil from the pan in my textbooks  
 you are disease brewery shit-sleeve you soil guilty  
 of growing nothing but your own stench you skin hose you striking  
 snake I made a danger of your dance on my plate your funk an accent  
 I fitnessed to forget in imperial times *gegu* was the practice of daughters  
 boiling their flesh into soup for sick fathers the trick  
 is to offer what hurts most to give in imperial tombs  
 they found bodies of women missing intestines some survived  
 & lived years without the body's only landline from mouth  
 to grave we are gloves for our ghosts no part of the woman  
 is wasted no immigrant is above hunger my mother says  
 eat what you're given or you'll starve in the next life in the next life  
 you teach me to knit a sky with flies to bloody my backmost teeth  
 I will be allergic to all clean things I will be fecal fabulous  
 all graves will unloose like anuses & the dead will citizen the sky  
 with their stink heaven will haggle over ownership of our bodies  
 & you my belly-tether my unraveling thick as a river  
 you birth everything the body cannot carry I feast on you  
 to feed my body back its losses