

Alicia Mountain

Drive Thru

Franchise French fries
and a Frosty
in the front seat chill of January—
 all I need is the swamp of you.
And to speak
with the backlit voice
through an intercom
in unhurried tones of decision,
 though I know what I want.
Static seasoning
the breath between us
 as if we are far apart
 as if I am calling
 from a submarine at peacetime
 and the crew is happy
 but they miss their mothers—
 they have waited months
 for the mail to come.

Because of my mom
we went to Wendy's.
Because Dave Thomas
was adopted as a baby,
before going on to found Wendy's
we went to Wendy's.
Because my mom was an orphan too
we went to Wendy's,
 which is notable
 for using fresh (not frozen)
 ground beef in square patties
 that hang over the edge of
 a round bun.
And I don't eat burgers anymore
but there is a square-peg-round-hole
phenomenon for each of us.

There is a Dave Thomas for each of us.

My father quit ROTC
and says it's his great regret.
Dave Thomas quit high school
and learned to cook
in the Korean War.
Before I was 18
my father never asked
and I never told
until someone
 in the crepe paper dark
 of a dorm room
sighed and said,
 all your desires are sacred.

What a way to fall in love with wanting.

Tonight I am asking for
 hot and cold
 for grease and sweet
 somewhere between chocolate and putty
 a mouth up against a milk carton
 froth the color of gray matter,
 a bit purple
 a brain frozen
 a brain freeze.

Please.

The sentry in his sentry box
is not so far away.
And what he means to say is not
 pull up to the window

but rather,
 come up for air,
 you submarine,

you draft dodger,
you twilight party of one.
All your desires are sacred.
All you need is to speak them aloud.