

## Second Prize

Cheyen Swan

### **a spell for revenge**

*toss a pinch of salt over your left shoulder.  
diffuse heady smoke of burning white sage.*

(for the junior who catcalled me in a freshman hallway)

*offer a hushed, urgent prayer to the goddess.  
press and preserve three small asters for patience.*

(for the boy who touched me in biology)

*streak dollar store eyeliner down flushed  
cheeks, running in watery rivulets.  
press your fingertips to the ink and  
smear. prepare for battle.*

(for the drunk who crooned vulgarity while waiting behind me at a safeway, breath reeking of piss-poor beer)

*rub blood on your chin and  
grow your nails into claws.  
wrap your body in linens, protect  
against the frigid, biting wind.*

(for the man who groped me in a disney world crowd, four steps behind my dad)

*squeeze blades of grass into yellow  
pulp, feel the earth on your tongue.  
no weapons, only wit and spite.*

(for the predators who handed me shame,  
claimed it was my burden to bear:  
you are a speck in this yawning void  
of a universe)

*may our fear now grip you.*