

CANNONBALL

I heard it was my turn to be shot from the cannon. At first I didn't believe it. People are always joking about these things. My friends told me it was serious this time though. Apparently there was a whole meeting about it, and people were divided on the issue. At the meeting, an old man took the microphone. No one had seen him in years, but he showed up to this meeting because he felt strongly that I should be shot from the cannon. His argument was so graceful, apparently, everyone in the audience was crying. His conclusion was about how hard the times were becoming, how the cannon stood for human resilience, and how I stood for all humans. In a sense, by shooting me from the cannon they were shooting themselves up too. I was simply the spokesperson. And what an honor it was to be the spokesperson, to carry the weight of the whole human family on my skinny shoulders. Fuck, I thought to myself. I always knew metaphors would be my downfall. "I am flattered," I said to my friend Amy. "I understand this is quite an honor. But why do I have to be shot from the cannon? I would rather do some community service, or maybe give a speech." I am quite anxious about public speaking, so you can tell how serious this was to me. I was not looking forward to being shot from the cannon at all. For one thing, no one who had been shot from the cannon had come back to say how it went. I couldn't help but assume the worst about them, and now, about myself. "Don't worry," Amy said. "There is probably a place over the hill that's better than this shitty city. That's probably where you're going. Plus," she said, "I hear the air is like a warm blanket when you're in it. People are so afraid of falling that they don't enjoy flying, but the truth is, they're the same." "Wow," I said. I was slightly offended that Amy had used my impending doom as a way to generalize about human fear

and happiness. I didn't have time for that. But still, she made me feel better about the whole thing. Especially the part about this shitty city. It was, after all, not the best place to be and the cannon was a fast way out. So I started walking, and every time I passed a car, I thought to myself, I love you car, this is the end. Then I approached the receptionist at the government building. She was licking her lips, seductively I thought, but she could have been just chapped. I cleared my throat and said, "I am ready." She looked up at me and suddenly I regretted everything. I grabbed her face and kissed her. "Oh," she said. "Thank you," she said. "I will tell my boss to build a cannon. We didn't think you'd come."