

CARVE

HONEST FICTION



Summer 2021 / \$12 US / \$16 CN



02

FICTION

Matt Jones
Vanessa Bernice De La Cruz
Jose Diego Medina
Amanda Hartzell

POETRY

Eric Bodwell
Despy Boutris
Katherine Riegel
Eric Wang

NONFICTION

Ashley Memory
Craig Coray

PLUS

Illustrations
Story Statshot
One to Watch
Decline/Accept

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AT BLESSED SOULS PENTECOSTAL

Eric Bodwell

Though we only attended
Blessed Souls Pentecostal
Church once, I was five
and knew how to wonder
at such things. The choir
stomped the painted
concrete floor, clapped, urged
us on to *glory in heaven*,
shouted back at the dark
crouching outside the corrugated
walls. Everyone swayed
like drunks, tongues on fire,
spilling the Holy Spirit
onto supplicating hands
with words they didn't
understand. Even my mother,
who knew all the stories in heaven,
waited in line for redemption
from the anointed hands
and *amens* of that black-suited preacher.

That night I, too, tried praying
with the same holy code,
stacking syllables like Legos
in whatever order I found them.
My mother said speaking
with unknown tongues
is a gift of the Spirit,
that God is always with us,
but having heard nothing
by morning, I pleaded
on worn, flannel knees.

Now, so many years
later, living on the fissures
of my own certainty, I know
those with burning tongues
in that church were alchemists
of their longing for the infinite,
an arcane art I never mastered.

