

At The End Of The World  
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*I don't want it to rain tonight.*  
*My yard gets muddy,*  
a first-grader tells me,  
her chubby fingers stuffed  
inside blue safety scissors,  
eyebrows knit.  
*And in the morning--*  
she hacks at a paper triangle--  
*my house will slide away.*  
I imagine the rain  
soaking the earth's layers  
to mud, 6371 kilometers deep,  
and everything sinking and  
sliding, melting off a molten core  
into space.

When I was six,  
I was afraid of being sucked  
down the pool drains  
and into dark pipes,  
straight to the ocean.  
The ocean always scared me.  
That's where Nemo  
lost his dad, and where

Japanese spider crabs grow  
to leg spans of thirteen feet.  
We are flimsy organisms  
next to their shells, that  
red, ruttled armour.  
We are inside-out,  
flesh exposed  
  
and bruised. In the summers,  
we flaunt fresh skin,  
kissed and toasted  
by the sun, peeking berry-brown,  
between denim waistbands  
and tight tanks,  
shimmering beneath  
hair-dusted arms, golden  
in the sun. At the end of the world,  
we don't want it to rain.  
We want to feel the ground  
firm beneath bare feet,  
layer after layer  
of strong, dry earth  
against flesh.