

LITTLE BONES

The ice cubes are fuzzy with frost—they were made with monsoon rain which is supposed to be better than ordinary rain.

“Look what I found,” I say, holding out the ice tray. Kumar stares at it as if he is looking over the edge of a cliff.

“Those’ll make us sick,” he says.

“No they won’t, they’re made out of rainwater.”

We spend the morning eating ice and watching tiny green finches spear moths on the window sill.

“I always thought finches ate berries,” I say. “They seem too delicate to be carnivorous.”

“Is there anything else?”

“What do you mean?”

“Is there anything else to eat besides ice?”

“No.”

Kumar puts his glass down and I wonder if he thinks I’m lying.

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The ice cubes put an edge on the day, making it glow with faint possibilities.

“We should go for a walk,” says Kumar. “Or start a garden or something.”

I remember how my mother buried fish bones and grocery bills in the backyard because she was scared something would happen if she didn’t. Whenever it rained, little bones would poke through the mud like pointing fingers.

“You really want to go for a walk?” I ask. Kumar rubs his face and sighs.

“No, I guess not.”

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Kumar's ice cubes are melting into a scummy pool of water that smells like an old toothbrush. He says there's something crawling along the bottom of his glass but I can't see anything.

"Why didn't you eat them?" I ask. "I ate all mine."

"You're going to get sick."

"I won't get sick, they were rainwater ice cubes."

"Does your tongue burn?"

"A little."

"You're going to get sick."

Kumar gets up, leaving behind a space that hums like angry bees. I watch the last of his ice melt and hear the bones settle into the folds of my skin, the blood crunching in my veins.