

# How to Hold Water and Other Things

Carrie George

*with lines from Franny Choi*

Tell me that it only rains  
there, wet place of hands where promises  
are made and kept by algae,  
undrinkable summers.

You asked what I could bring with me:  
collateral, buried field mice, fistfuls  
of rust-colored dirt.

*How many times have I taken something  
that did not belong to me?*

You ask as if you don't know my rotting,  
my stolen, free-ranged secrets,  
my rifle scopes  
tracking clay pigeons lonely in the sky.

I've tried and tried to pocket rain.

Look at these buckets  
lined on the lawn, my soaked skin,  
clothes pinned to the wind. In this life  
dry land is as dream as \_\_\_\_\_.

In this life you are a haunt  
I know too close.

The fact: You're too late.

My knives out already. My wrists,  
jars of pebbles and folded paper, I've given  
them back, made these and other trades  
to keep the hounds from latching

on what's left, to keep the names and nights

still mine.

Carrie George (she/her) is an MFA candidate for poetry at the Northeast Ohio MFA program. She is the graduate fellow at the Wick Poetry Center where she teaches poetry workshops throughout the community. She is a Pushcart Prize nominee, and her work has appeared on *Poets.org* and in journals including *Sidereal Magazine*, *The Emerson Review*, and *Gordon Square Review*.