

## North Rim

*Katherine Fallon*

I.

You took me there to help me  
grieve his loss and, remembering

this from your own childhood,  
told me to watch intently

for the exact moment  
the cove of pine ends  
and the canyon is revealed.

It was a proper chasm,

a reckoning. A god damn fever dream.

It made us into insects.

II.

I'm not the only one to wonder  
about those who first encountered  
the canyon, minding their own

wretched business as they crossed  
that dusty terrain, stretches too vast  
to possibly behold. Disappointment

surely an understatement: accessory

to failed passage, the earth's jagged  
wound likely meant death. I felt

the marrow ache of their bodies  
at the very sight of it, and still,  
they must have marveled.

III.

We stayed in a cabin surrounded  
by walking paths, so close to the edge—

a stain on one ceiling tile resembled  
fast food's Wendy, but ghoulish, pigtailed Joker  
on high.

Windows open all suffocating night,

legs entwined, hike-tired, hearing voices  
as strangers passed, unknowing.

We stared at the laminate wall,  
at the goblin ceiling tile, until one of us

rolled onto the other. I don't remember  
the sex but what it taught me: that silence

is possible regardless of threshold—

Next day, we gazed into the earth's

violent fissure and said nothing: chasm

another open mouth, never filled.