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Category: Poetry

When the Marbits Globbed Together

In the factory we called the marshmallows
marbits. Each batch was baptized in cornstarch, anointed
with that holy white powder. We shrank the marbits in a machine
the size of a charter school bus. They were shrinky-dinks of sugar,
rainbows and stars and clovers smaller than my pinky nail. They expanded like clouds
before they were shrunk to size. I was sorting the clovers from the hearts. Making sure
each shape was contained, only itself. I was in grad school, I wasn't supposed to be here.
I was supposed to be living in a house with heated floors. A bidet, even. This and the hum
of the shrinker made me want to scream sometimes. That was the good thing
about the factory—you could scream all you wanted. No one could hear you
over the din of the marbits. So maybe the factory was a little like space. It felt like it
sometimes, with all the hydraulics and alarms and beeping machines and the stupid suits
we had to wear. But you don't care about that, or how cold it was. I'll get to the good part.
I knocked over one of the baptizing barrels, full of cornstarch. It covered the ground like snow.
It was snow in space. It was beautiful and I couldn't hear the supervisor's yells because
the marbits kept coming. The marbits globbed together, formed orgies and families
and just stuck to each other. It was so sweet I wanted to cry. We had baby-powdered them apart
but here they all were, hugging. I felt distinctly alone. I plucked a glob from the assembly line
and ate it. I felt arms and legs kicking inside me. I wanted to care for my marbit globs forever,
never wanted them trapped in those cardboard cereal boxes. The cornstarch snow settled.
The supervisor was yelling at me but it was so quiet, the snow fell so quietly.
In that moment I wanted everything in the world to press up against me.