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KIMBERLY KEMLER

ON KAJII MOTOJIRŌ'S (ALLEGED) JELLYFISH

Each morning, after a breakfast of streptomycin
and ginger tea, he would brood over them: the way
one might fit nicely in the palm of his hand
slightly larger than a piece of fruit, the way

he might leave one somewhere (his neighbor's
koi pond; the Osaka canal; in a bucket of water
under a cherry tree, where he was known
to contemplate the later stages of his disease—

when *consumption* had two meanings, previously
a word he used only to describe meals, now
filling and overfilling the cone jellies under his ribs),
the way their tentacles' lilt might be compared

to a lion's mane, but subtler—the saltwater
combing them out from beneath umbrella bodies,
their multicolored bells all glowing yellow
like lemons, but warm to the touch.