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It's Almost Tomato Season and You Know What that Means

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CATHERINE RAGSDALE

IT'S ALMOST TOMATO SEASON AND YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS

I call my ex to finish the joke for me. My mother answers *tomatoes!* Somewhere in Austin my father puts plants in the ground and my mother holds the flashlight.

All I want to do is put more red on my body. I throw my arm into a wall but it won't bruise. My dog takes a runny shit on the stepstones. I chew on just one seed.

I ask my father why not plant flowers even though I know the answer. If you haven't planted your seeds you better ketchup. My mother sets the table with the largest plates she owns, looks at the one I chipped with disdain.

I want to practice kissing on everybody's tomato mouths. My sister makes gazpacho too soon and it tastes just like vinegar. It's impractical to grow anything inedible.

I think about how if I ate enough leaves they could kill me. The grocery store has had tomatoes all year. I croon to my dog *you're so sad so goddamn sad*. I sit on his patio and dig my heels in the mud.

Soon, yellow flowers.