

thanksgiving 2012

the mastodon's tusk is longer than my torso times three – that's how human ribs can be compared to toothpicks. at the museum of natural history on the university of michigan campus, rob shows me the room of native stuffed birds after we wander the dinosaur graveyard and petrified rock. the loon makes a sound like a wolf – thin and upward. its beak is sharp and black against spotted feathers - but it is defenseless. we count the birds with webbed feet then venture to see *human health complications post-evolution*. it's no surprise that becoming bipedal made childbirth harder. narrow hips are good for running – for hunting. not good for birthing. outside snow is creeping diagonal to wind gusts so we don't open our mouths for minutes or city blocks. and today they are dropping bombs on Gaza. we say dropping like they're just falling. i am looking up. the white sky feels ancient – like old cities. Jerusalem might be petrified too. google maps will not display the distance between Gaza and Jericho, but it can't be far. last april, a man in the main square gave me a glass of fresh lemonade in exchange for a smile - a foreign smile. just before the road turns to the mount of temptation. i was only a visitor. Jericho is the oldest inhabited city on the planet and also the lowest. how it survived below the level of the sea i can't understand. i am young for the first time since my birthday – Jericho my foil. rob is walking slower than begs the temperature when the mastodon appears again in squint of my eye. we turn down the left alley before re-finding rob's house, fence protected and windproof. we drink a beer and talk about roommates who don't do their fucking dishes. i ask what rob did for thanksgiving. *friendsgiving* he says and points at the pot of chili on the stove. we play a game of cards until dark. what if we don't listen to the news for a whole week. i am brushing my teeth extra hard. the bristles feel like toothpicks scraping. there was a photograph in the NY times yesterday of a woman carrying her bloody daughter out of the rubble. she was flag draped and framed by buildings that crumbled while everyone waited. is this is what mourning looks like. my face in the mirror stuck linear. rob is making tea now so we can watch something funny before bed. the kettle sound is prehistoric – not whistling - and our feet on the stairs are thunder. i imagine a herd before the mastodon went extinct. there must have been a fall out. ice or fire or volcano. if not they'd be roaming today – thundering. the denim duvet cover on rob's bed is sturdy like canvas but softer. it could hold five bodies at least and does a good job with the feathers inside. those feathers are keeping us warm. i want to take it with me tomorrow when again i catch the train back. there was also a bomb in Tel Aviv. a bus with people going from point a to point b. people going home. soon my feet are starting to sweat under the down. rob says he found something good to watch and i ask if he's ever heard a loon howl. to the northern sky. of course he says. he walked four hours to see it.