

# MATHIAS SVALINA

## Sleepwalking

The boy finds a tooth on the asphalt, another tooth halfway up the street, a third down the block; he follows the trail to the bone factory. The teeth click in his windbreaker pockets like gumdrops.

Above the entrance to the bone factory sits a sign that reads *Not aversion or contempt, or even pity, what shade of white will stain you skin?* The boy knows the bone factory does not make bones but converts old bones into new bones using machetes & telephones.

The boy watches delivery trucks moan in & out of the parking lot. He reaches into the pocket of his windbreaker & removes an arrowhead, a piece of chocolate cake & a small white mouse. He places these on the wet asphalt.

There is a spot near the marsh where the swallows burst into blue. The boy buried his mother's wedding ring in the dirt there & when he returned a week later an elm tree had sprouted.

The sleepwalkers gather around the boy & his things. Each sleepwalker holds three things: one sleepwalking woman holds a knife, a cloth diaper & a yellow glove; one man holds a brick, a scale & a can of hominy.

The sleepwalkers drop their things below the street signs. Soon the street signs are covered with piles of the sleepwalker's things. Every day the sleepwalkers return & look at their things. The smell of the bone factory is chalk & cold. Few people believe that the bone factory exists.