

Lucien Darjeun Meadows

Interval

To be admitted to the psychiatric ward is to become a child again. Once, I was fifteen for four years. There were no locks in bedrooms or bathrooms—in one unit, no doors—but sun and wind were twice-locked out, steel doors and double-paned windows still in my dreams. At every meal, the nurses would put on Enya to *promote a positive atmosphere*. To be vegetarian was *an illness*. To not finish the nine-hundred calorie meal in an hour was *disordered*. To wear a t-shirt was *triggering*. In the evening, from room to room we passed a box of *remembrances*—a goose feather, a riverstone, dried rose petals and twigs. We were indoor children in a glass box. Each day measured out precisely the same. When I was released in August, breeze set me shivering, shaking, goosebumps rappelling down my skin, as I swam through air—world filled with sensation, with touch. And I, wanting to break open this body, this husk.

