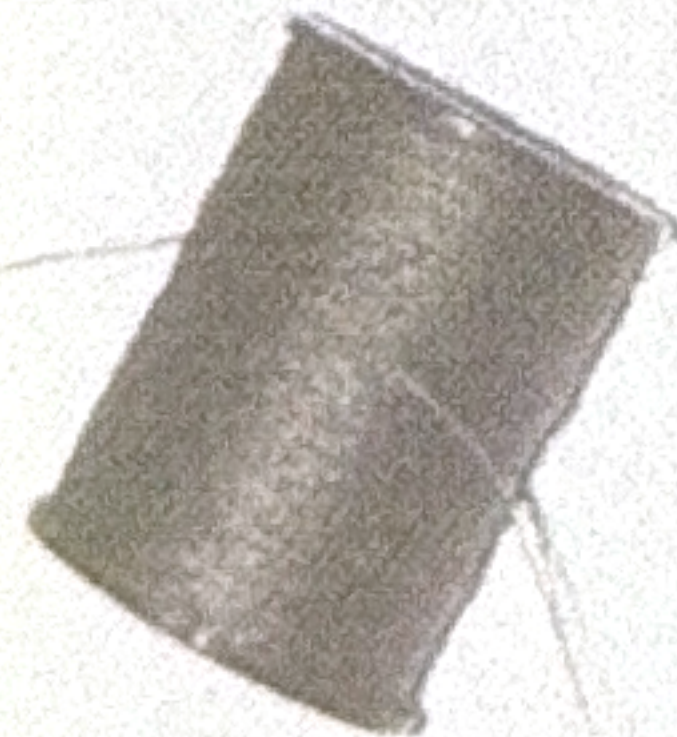


PHANTOM

Termination



FICTION



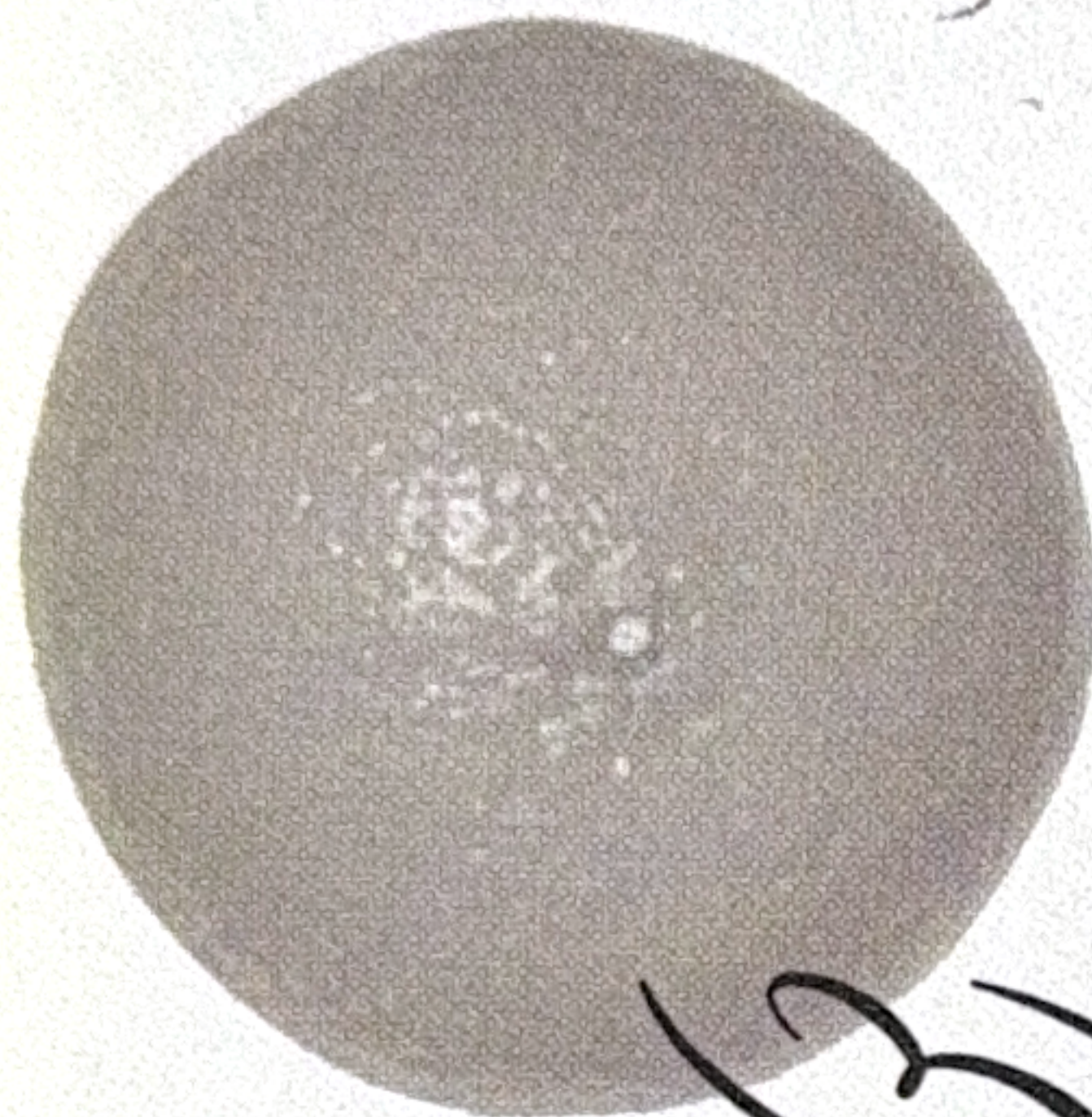
"FLASHES OF TIME,  
FROM THE THREADS  
OF MY DRESS"  
JORDAN GERM  
*fiction*



"DEVILS"  
LUCIA FINKELSTEIN  
*fiction*



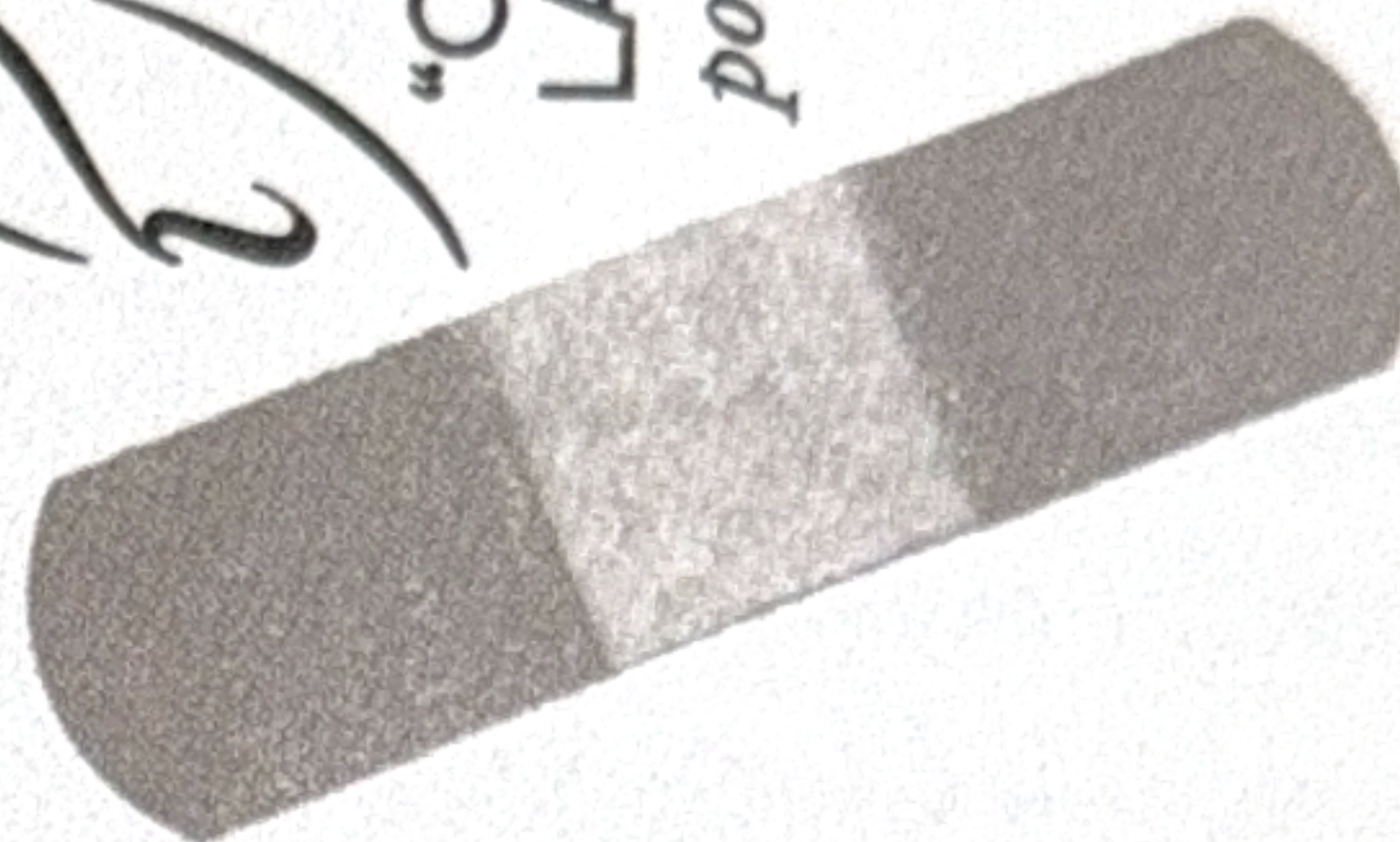
"TIDAL  
TRANSCENDANCE"  
ELISE YOUNG  
*fiction*



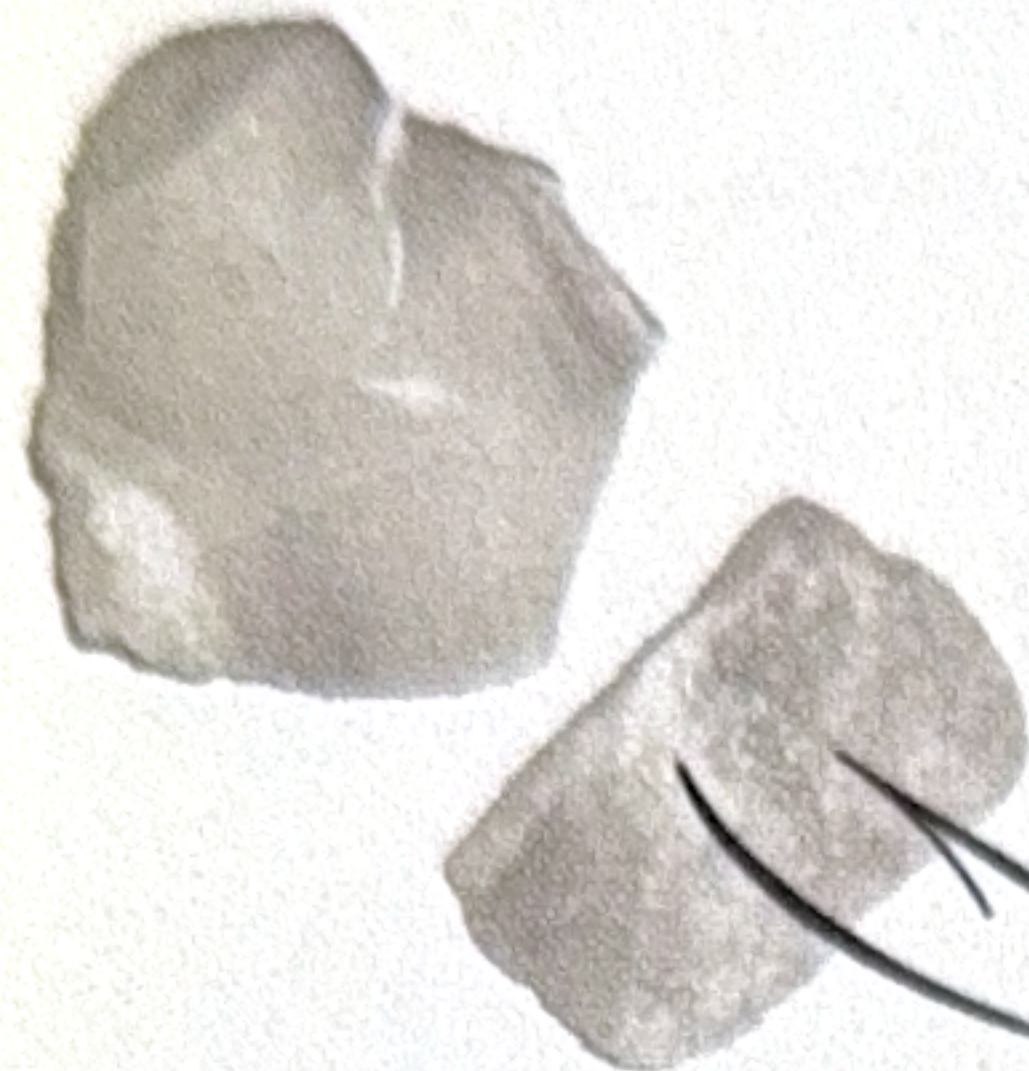
"WAYS TO RELISH  
YOUR SUPPERING"  
CHITHRA ANAND  
*poetry*



"I AM THINKING"  
MARISSA PHIL  
*poetry*



"O"  
LALA MAMMADOVA  
*poetry*



"CALANQUE"  
ELIZA RUDALEVIGE  
*poetry*

POETRY



# I am thinking

MARISSA PHUL

## on the plane to Tokyo

There's nothing direct about translation. You can't match words across languages. Instead, you look for meaning, try to capture essence. Is that not similar to how we relate to other people? I can't pair our experiences one-to-one so that we come out even. I try to craft a foundation of understanding through interpretation. But then I wonder, how much of my interpretation is projection? Just to take you as you present yourself, allowing you to unfold in front of me how and when you want to? My mind spaces out as I swing from thought to thought, and back. I fear I won't ever settle on an answer, more likely I pass out before the haunting dissipates.



**waiting mid-run at a stoplight in manhattan**

Some things do not need to be conquered. The difference between my grandma's samosas and your mother's thanksgiving bread do not need to be bridged. I think there is an inherent unknowing. Something you cannot touch, feel, or understand without being in it. There are pieces of each individual that can never be known to another. Pieces you must carry alone. Cruel that the human experience allows gaps for loneliness to slip in even if you are loved. Differences that cannot be overcome, distances that cannot be traveled. You must become comfortable with the love that can blossom despite the lack of a guarantee. I am thinking of you, of the way you make my heart so light. Of the way you love me and hold me, of the way I can look at you for a hundred years. I am thinking I cannot know you completely, I must trust the canyon between us is not covered in knives.