

where is miranda?

ore:

Miranda Silver is in Dover, in the ground beneath her mother's house.

Her throat is blocked with a slice of apple

(to stop her speaking words that may betray her)

her ears are filled with earth

(to keep her from hearing sounds that will confuse her)

her eyes are closed, but

her heart thrums hard like hummingbird wings.

Does she remember me at all I miss her I miss the way her eyes are the same shade of grey no matter the strength or weakness of the light I miss the taste of her I

see her in my sleep, a star planted seed-deep, her arms outstretched, her fists clenched, her black dress clinging to her like mud.

She chose this as the only way to fight the soucouyant.

eliot:

Miri is gone.

Just gone. We'd had an argument. It was dark outside. Gusts of wind tangled in the apple trees around our house and dropped fruit onto the roof, made it sound like someone was

tapping on the walls in the attic, Morse code for *let me out*, or something weirder. The argument was a stupid one that opened up a murky little mouth to take in other things. Principally it was about this pie I'd baked for her. She wouldn't eat any of it, and she wouldn't let me.

'Why did you use the winter apples?' She asked it over and over. Nothing I replied could break her monotone.

She said: 'You've done too much now. I can't trust you anymore.'

She shook her head and dropped to the disappointed hiss of a primary-school teacher, or a kid trying to borrow the authority of one:

'Bad! You are *bad*.'

(My sister turned seventeen in a mental-health clinic; I brought our birthday cake to her there.)

Miri's accusations, her whole manner that night scared the shit out of me. She looked in my direction but she couldn't seem to focus on me. She was the thinnest I'd ever seen her. Her hands and head were the heaviest parts of her. Her neck drooped. She hugged herself, her fingers pinning her dress to her ribs. There was an odd smell to her, heavy and thick. It was clear to me that she was slipping again, down a new slide. When she said she didn't trust me, I turned away rather than let myself get angrier.

I went up to my room. Miri didn't call after me. I don't think she came upstairs again. Or she may have, without my hearing. I'm not sure. I heard the front door slam, but I thought it was just one of the guests coming home late. I stayed where I was, knelt on my window seat, smoking, seeing shapes in the rain, listening to all the apples in the world bouncing off our roof.

White is for Witching

That last time I saw Miri, she wasn't wearing any shoes. Five months ago I took that as security that she would come back. And now I keep coming back to that in my mind, the fact that she was barefoot. That her running away was a heat of the moment thing, unplanned.

A part of me knows that we can't find her because something has happened to her.