

Sarah Yanni

from “church camp”

to begin a steep drive upwards sharpie marker and dirt scent coupled
 with smooth rocks and black in our nostrils there a single week in time
 repeated on a loop five seven ten years a primal desire subdued
 by rainbow beads and glue napkins soaking up milk and loose hairs

I considered it once
 being a martyr
 most were
 young and many
 women
 so I
 envisioned their
 screams as mine
 an idyllic
 thrashing in a
 hand-made gown

a martyr endured methods
 of ending like
 rocks and burning
 choking
 and stabbing and
 heads sliced away
 all for a god
 who let it happen
 over and over and over
 again

there we talked about salvation but I
 focused on the
 stained glass shards

remember yield at the foot of a priest

a perfect image of bowing children

merciful begs and
 the smell of incense impossible
 to forget