

Molly Twomey

**CHIC  
TO BE  
SAD**



Gallery Books

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## *Bouldering*

Movement won't always be a locked door,  
a shedding mat, steel plates twisted into bars, attempts

to squat jump, mountain climb without sound  
in the 6 a.m. dark — the back of a toothbrush

scouring what you haven't burned off.  
Someday, in a climbing gym on Model Farm Road,

you'll forget the pebble-dash that used to be  
your spine, the old pumice of your hip bones.

The only hardness is what you'll choose  
to lean a palm on, arch a foot around.

Your fingers will reach into an undercling jug,  
the way they used to grope your stomach for loss.

## *Gnawed to Bone*

I swung a pineapple  
by its mohawk,  
burst a melon on lino.

Granted, I was dreaming  
but I know the panic  
when what I need

is out of stock.

My body has shrunk  
behind the cage of a trolley,

afraid to approach  
what is trapped under  
barcodes. On my birthday

I fractured my ankle  
kicking the car boot  
as I filled it. I want to hold

the girl scrutinizing  
yoghurt rice cakes,  
pistachios detained in shells.

Her calorie tracker open,  
nails breaking through  
the scalp of a cantaloupe.

Seven years in recovery.  
All I crave is a lit match  
to throw at the grocery store.

## *Stay Quiet*

He's so sick  
of the TV's endless bellow,  
the stench of faeces and mashed potatoes,

but Grandad never complains  
even as his surgery gets postponed over and over,  
bruises on his arms like berry compote.

He knows not to stir, that one patient  
was murdered by another  
for weeping all night.

My first Luas trip, a man, high  
or drunk, groped my grandfather's skull,  
giggled at his grey curls, twirled them around

his knuckles before smoothing  
them flat as a field of maize.  
Grandad sat as if at a barber's and waited

for the guy with a knife poking  
from his pocket to stagger away.  
All he had lost by then —

his wife, seven border collies.  
I was shaking, nine years old, without a ticket.  
'We're invisible,' Grandad whispered.

## *Body Dysmorphia*

Remember that show where the child would guess  
if the next picture is a creature

bigger or smaller  
and the child says, bigger, bigger, bigger

and out comes a mouse, a slug, an ant  
but all the child can see

is killer whales, elks,  
their own swelling hands.