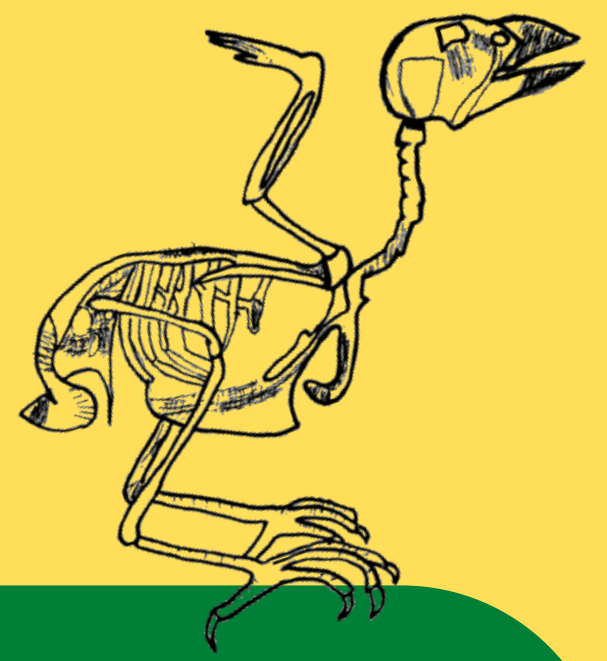


New Year's Eve



new year's eve. i dance in an intersection in front of city hall. midnight kisses at jalisco's. we sleep on the floor, wake up to bodies curled around each other like apostrophes. morning baths with a boy i've known for two weeks. we talk about family. mostly him. because mine is sorrow-brimmed. it's new year's day.

do i keep this memory?

new year's eve at the beach. a different boy tells me he likes me. i laugh, mimicking the waves. how can he like me? i shatter under the moon. christmas trees burn in a bonfire. it's new year's day.

do i keep this memory?

new year's eve. shrooms. amsterdam. another boy. a parrot sits on his shoulder, glowing red, green, & blue. i know it's not there. my fingers reach, stroke the feathers. later on the hotel bed, penguins ferry me on a journey across my sub-conscious. the boy fades from importance. we smoke hash & a northern lights joint. it's new year's day.

do i keep this memory?

new year's eve. i make my mother smile for a selfie. a corner of her lips droops: a lopsided grin, glistening with teeth. i print & frame the picture. she throws it away. she calls & says i wish i was dead. it's new year's day.

do i keep this memory?

new year's eve. i walk to my friend's house. we play clue & dominos. i leave before midnight. fall asleep before fireworks, my cat hiding under my arm. rough tongue licks my ear, my cheek. a padded toe, a bit of claw nudges my eyeball. it's new year's day.

memories keep me. memories keep me breathing. memories keep me. keep me dancing, burning, glowing, grinning.

memories like videos, only i can watch. memories like a shawl i wrap myself in. memories i keep because photos are fleeting, sometimes showing what was never there.



Karo Ska