

Now All Is Echo

but not the goddess, you said, in an argument we had where I no longer remember the sides. We were together in a dream and on the side of a road after noticing a sack moving the grass. Kittens, it's probably kittens, you said, trying to scare me in this dream within a dream, a nightmare, a version of a recurring one. For me it's always discarded sacks on the road—garbage bags tied with twine—and inside barely a breath but warm still, a litter of kittens. The top layer still capable of meowing. The layers beneath still and only still. In these dreams, the worst ones, they live for minutes, enough time to make me think I can be their savior, at least to one. Those are the worst dreams. In the version where we, still together, pull off the road and the sack is hard, a quarter full with stiff bodies, the nightmare is less. There's nothing to do but mourn and praise the silence, be grateful for the lack of audible memory. When I save them—take them home, wrap them in pillowed fleece, rub their bellies and beneath their tails after feeding them, do what their mother would do—I wake from the dream angry. Angry at the discarded. The ones who discard. Angry I wake to no one and nothing but the echo of meowing.