
C ELIBACY

KATERINA IVANOV

I am aware of the parts
of my body that have left,
that shrank or faded or died.

Of the follicles and lashes,
the bruises and baby
teeth and the parts
that hold nothing
at all, that just sit
and wait to feel full,

that wait
that wait and wait.

It has been seven months
twenty-six days
eight hours
and fifteen seconds since

I have been touched,
and my body has started to arch
toward strangers without my
permission as if awakened by something
sweet and lingering in the promise
of their mouths and the slip
of skin above their

waistbands.

But I've been trying not
to wince, anymore
when you touch
me. So I slip
under the sheets alone and fill
my mouth with only flannel.