My father's last meal was an uneaten ham sandwich, and his last joke was directed at me: Did you have much trouble deciding what to wear?

I had worn the same torn jeans and green hoodie every day for the two weeks leading up to his death. Earlier, my father and I had eaten breakfast in a truck stop at Deacon's Corner, on the outskirts of Winnipeg. We were on our way into the city to meet with his doctor, and then to gather with the rest of the family for dinner at Tubby's where my father ordered a ham sandwich as a favour to my mother, and talked about colours with my daughter, and watched long and hard as my son ambled off home, getting smaller and smaller until he was a tiny dot and then gone.

If I combine the name of my father's favourite hymn with the name of my sister's favourite book at age eighteen, the title would be "Oh for a Thousand Tongues to Sing the Lives of Girls and Women."

If I then added another favourite book of my sister's and a favourite song of my mom's, the title would be "Oh for a Thousand Tongues to Sing the Lives of Girls and Women, Sons and Lovers in a Dangerous Time."

In Winnipeg, when I was pregnant with my son, I lived in an old apartment block by the Assiniboine River (the same river that years later would consume my cellphone) next to a tennis court and a bridge. An old woman lived down the hall from us. There were tiny little doors on our bigger doors. These tiny doors were the size and shape of a Penguin Classic and had little latches at eye level. When there was a knock on our door, we opened our tiny door first to see who it was and whether we wanted to open the bigger door to let them in. Many times each day, and sometimes during the night, the old woman would bang on my door, anguished, calling out for her son: Peter, Peter! She spoke only Hungarian. She was in the very late stages of dementia. Her words sounded like, Pater, Pater!

Her son, also old in my mind—I was twenty-one—lived alone in the apartment next to mine. He was a physics professor at the university. I would open my door and take the woman's hand and lead her to her son's door and knock and wait for him to open his door. He never bothered opening his tiny door with the latch to see who was there. He knew who was there. Here's your mom, I'd say. Peter would apologize, and I'd wave it away, and Peter would take his mother's hand and slowly walk her back down the dim corridor to her own apartment. Pater, Pater, Mama, Mama, the two would murmur, the old woman calm now and slumped against her old son's body.

One morning—it was late in the fall, after an appointment with my obstetrician—I came home to find police in the

hallway outside my apartment. The door to Peter's apartment was open. The police held their hands over their faces when they spoke to me. Peter had electrocuted himself in the bathtub. I ran to my apartment and opened all the windows. I threw up in the kitchen sink. I went back into the hallway and said to the police, But what about his mother? She lives in the apartment down the hall. The police said they had taken her away.

I did not ask, but often wondered, which of these cataclysmic events happened first: Peter's death or his mother's removal?

These days, my two youngest grandchildren have a habit of biting their mothers, and in some instances, other children. My daughter and my daughter-in-law texted me photos of the bite marks, some taken by themselves and some by concerned daycare workers. My daughters are worried about the biting, but also worried because babies who bite are not allowed to attend daycare. And if that were to happen, my daughters would *lose their fucking minds*.

When I saw the photos, I texted back that it was good to know my grandkids were biting *other* kids, not themselves. I've received no response.

My six-year-old granddaughter characterizes my writing *process* this way: She has two pairs of glasses. One for downstairs.

One for upstairs. She mixes them up. She can't wear the downstairs glasses upstairs, or the upstairs glasses downstairs. She pretends to light a candle and puts it beside her coffee cup and then she stares straight ahead at her computer and reaches for her candle. She mimes drinking it, and screams.

Today I looked at pictures on the internet of bodies after being hit by trains. But what I'm really trying to do is research winds for my Wind Museum. I tell myself, Just think about wind. Stick with the wind.

The Saffir–Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale (SSHWS) classifies hurricanes—western hemisphere tropical cyclones that exceed the intensities of tropical depressions and tropical storms—into five categories, distinguished by the intensities of their sustained *winds*.

Now we're getting somewhere.

The skunk with distemper is stuck in the window well again, chewing incessantly on the garden hose that is coiled up in there.

Through my window, across my tiny yard, I can see my four-year-old grandson in my mother's bedroom as he tumbles and jumps and spins. I'm listening to "Le Tango de Chez Nous," and his movement appears choreographed, so beautiful and poetic and playful. My mother is lying in her bed, clapping.

Last night I put this same grandson to bed. I lay down with him in his narrow bed and we talked for a while in the dark, with his head on my shoulder. We held hands. Grandma, he said. Yeah? I said. How old are you? Fifty-eight, I said. And then you'll be sixty, he said. And then you'll be seventy.

And then you'll be eighty. And then you'll be ninety. And then you'll be one hundred. And then you'll be murdered.

What! I said.

I mean and then you'll be dead, he said.

Okay, I answered.

And then I'll wrap you in toilet paper, he said.

Thank you, sweetheartchen.

You're welcome, Grandma.