**SodIum**

Kiana McCrackin

I am looking for myself

in motherhood, mother, marme,

mama, mom, all these words

with no I.

I am here. I am here,

leaking milk from my breasts,

standing on swollen feet,

my body numbing under the weight

of them. But I am not numb.

I might be salt. I am dissolving,

melting in the boiling water

lapping at my shriveling skin. I might be salt.

I am not sugar and I am disappearing

in the dish water, my hands

scrub away the food I made

which is never eaten. I might be salt

poured on the scraped knee,

of my daughter who fell

on concrete my husband calcified;

the concrete has no I

yet he thought it would hold me,

my daughter’s red darkens

on the grey. The dishwater cools—

her tears make me

cold. I try to hold

the boiling inside the throbbing

of my veins, wooden spoon resting

on my head, like my mother taught me

a trick to stop water from bubbling over.

I am salt on the wounds I have

cut into my children and plastered

with Disney Princess band-aids.

Sometimes, the wooden spoon

fails, I am salt in boiling water

I am here. Screaming about

being more careful, returning

to the kitchen sink, cold,

I am here, and I wonder;

does my daughter wish

I was not?