

Shapeshifters Banned, Censored, or Otherwise Shit-Listed, aka Chosen Family Poem

The one whose ma'i was stolen as she slept.

The one who sold everything to live as bite marks.

The one named Mai, Mai, E 'Ai.

The one raising his scalp like foil from a pan of meat. *You know how many pigs I've killed*, he asks. And when he says *kill* he means it affectionately. Not *I killed pigs to feed my blood* but *I slept with pigs, my arms booked around them*. When you love what you kill.

The one who thinks he knows who stole the ma'i.

The one with 'ō'ō feathers instead of hair. The years it took to catch each bird and adorn her head in yellow.

The one swallowing a kukui tree for the rest of her life.

The one who became the rest of her life.

The one still searching for the ma'i.

The one meant to be a locked door but fell in love with the crank of keys. *I'd rather hear that sound and die*, she said. Now all the doors in Kahului stay open.

The one made of open until her drunk mother chased her with a knife screaming *you filthy, you filthy, your filthy fucking broad*. She is the cure to everything that hurts but will never let anyone touch her again.

The one growing into long, solid sticks to poke at women who, after kissing another woman for the first time, do not speak for days. In the grove in Hā'ō'ū, they plant their tongues.

The one who slept with the ma'i first.

The one who slept with the ma'i last.

The one currently sleeping with the ma'i because *ma'i was never stolen*.

The one all-remembering, coughing up coconuts as she laughs. Sometimes they call her grove. Sometimes, Hā'ō'ū.