

DIE PUPPE

after Hans Bellmer, 1902-1975

My skull crumbles into sugar at the sight of them. Justice cannot be done in a photograph, but men like us don't care for justice. I see and wallow in my own spittle, imagining a touch of wooden fingers, of running toes along their seams, tickling those plaster breasts knocked out of place in Dada frenzy. Body cartographer, whittle those little girls from soap, from clay, from driftwood. Each is such a sweet Lavinia, her limbs snapped. Do they smell like daisies and yellow petroleum jelly? I've only seen photos. The false twins, their falsies, the buttocks doubling as breasts, legs as arms. One tin eye on a cotton cord, and if I pull, might she call me *mutter*? If only you designed them like clockworks, precious Salomes of Metropolis. If only you could rig each girl to unbuckle own her back brace, curl down her own stockings. Would they rebel? Best I guess to leave them hollow, crippled dolls lacking the will to scramble away. Each tiny rubber face is perfect, even with nothing behind to light it up.