

SARAH ROSE NORDGREN

1917

The holiest thing a mother does is know
your name long after her skin

disintegrates. I stand in a dark room imagining
my birth in 1917, so I can reverse

each injury her body takes. If history
were a computer programmed by a genius child

on the best day of his life, her guts would be
tethered to her spine more tightly.

When she hunched over the steaming
kitchen sink, it would be yellow petals pouring

from her eyes. Her breasts would ungrow
to fresh mosquito bites, and the tiny,

plastic Reset button, installed
in her chest so carefully, would glow.

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