

# Hymn for a Faith Crisis

by Taylor Franson

*To say it is mindless misses the point.*  
~ Camille T. Dungy

*Resolutely*

You think about that study you read about jellyfish. How scientists proved those tender underwater clouds can think without brains. And how these scientists did all that research, just to exploit their findings to make money off of programming robots. You think, also, of all the last names who died with childless women.

How unused their empty wombs must have felt. Like the empty heads of the jellyfish, capable of learning. This, of course, makes you think about God. You grow a granite staircase up your spine. An arrow branded on the nape of your neck, pointed up up up. The sun carved

into the flesh above one eye, the moon above the other. The fingerprints of His emerald gospel ruthless along your retinas. Strings of pearls round your neck, hanging down like tentacles. How as a child you, an empty vessel, were filled, programmed, then at 23, had the last name you loved stripped in the name of

covenant. According to the tradition of your fathers you were laid bare — another word for vacant. If the prophets were to study your soft body now how empty would they find you? If they took their chainsaw hymns to the back of your head would they find a way to interpret the holy text of your mind? Or see

only the silence they're expecting. How many times they have called your body temple in the same breath they called it theirs?

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