Concerning My Strange Affinity for Scorching Heat

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(i used to be wild highway dandelions
sometimes i miss the sky stretching as far as the interstate)

i miss pancake flat horizon
the sunset's fingers
palm to palm with the black dirt

the soccer field dust
kicked up
stuck to my teeth
the mud pit season
wiping war paint beneath our eyes

(i used to be the bluebonnet smell of springtime
sometimes i miss chewing on onion grass and speaking shapes into the clouds)

barefoot days
pool sides
and scorching concrete
tire swing imprints
trampoline burn

and the slow slow
molasses speech
all tangled up in vowels

something in my heart is right
when the ground cracks like chapped lips in summer
and winter was just when we sang christmas songs

(i used to be the black texas ground
sometimes i miss crunching yellow grass parted only by wood fences)

the coyote’s midnight call
trains rattling my windows
cricket thermometer in the corner
(chirp-chirp-chirp getting faster/growing louder)

a country station burning a hole in my heart
maybe it's a gas leak
maybe it's cigarette ashes i tap off my smoking consciousness

something burns my heart
like only 100 degree texas can

Rachel Stern is a writer of poetry and prose. She enjoys proving that poetry doesn't have to be as boring as Walt Whitman's “Leaves of Grass.” She has previously been published in Sketch Literary Journal, The Atlas Vol. 5, and Vol. 6. Rachel is currently studying English Literature, International Studies, and struggling to learn Chinese.