

# IT'S SORT OF A RELIGION

Beau Farris

to be a child in an open field. fingers and hair digging down the dirt  
desperate for soil, and nothing more. swaths of grass uprooted like broken eye contact.  
when did my hands stop plunging into the snake's den? those black coils promised  
perfection. now my shoulders poke through the tall grass

and a bare path shuns my agnostic bare feet. maybe it's less dramatic  
when my eyes could not differentiate one reptilian eye  
and used a stolen scalpel to sever snake scale from entrail:  
a communion between my fingers and dead organs.

curiosity probably didn't belong to the cat. even looking back to  
the life I've disassembled, my hands cover my mouth  
like two hands make the steeple. the entails of dawn paint wheat red,  
but I've conditioned myself to look away. when adolescence meant

taking apart bodies like the remote control. my fingers organized into someone else's  
to see how their flesh worked, like a prayer between bird wings. falling.