


ALISON NEWALL 

Ode to my Stretch Marks 

On a beach in Mexico I lie,  
a bikini clad cipher.  
I am no longer picture  
perfect.  
Not for me the swim suit edition:  
I’ll never now be  
food for fantasy  
cause an airbrushed  
hush from the  
pages of a magazine, be  
subject to a hungry  
gaze.  

But  
my thighs can tell a story:  
fine traceries of faded lines  
embroider breasts  
embellish hips  
spell out my adventures  
in the wars of birth.  

I am borne into a new generation,  
become one with those who know,  
by their blood’s baptism,  
another code.  

I do not envy those  
perfect girls:  
their bodies tell no tales  
they become images  
for other people’s stories.  

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Alison Newall is currently a Ph.D. student at McGill University writing her thesis on Lucy Maud Montgomery. Her short story “Loons” has been published in Hejira.