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Cover Yourself, **הַשָּׂא**; to the Wailing Wall // Cafeteria, or the Sixth Grade Classroom

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Yael Massen

Cover Yourself, אשה; to the Wailing Wall

A heat blanket:—this scarf fevers
my body—: a cooking s'more, bitter
milk chocolate melt. Oh holiness, oh great stone
graham cracker. In this open-air oven
I oven a flavor of watered salt & bile
or whatever the word in two backwards dialects translates to
something like a near-blind woman chopping carrots
for her husband with a rusted knife.
How the blame for wounds on her
fingertips is her first possession—the ugly pockets of her
skin-suit, a sweated burden of saline & sin
she must apologize for in layers. This is no sweet
duty in the price of an apple-bite, but a bearded fear of eyewandering
& wishes caught
in whiskers with crumbs—the way woman means wife
before she even becomes one. We are always preparing
for a meal.

Yael Massen

Cafeteria, or The Sixth Grade Classroom

This paper fortune cookie—cootie catcher—
has me all hooty-eyed & orthodontically
challenged, like a psychic's favorite sucker—
I unfold the bettied page:—origami futurescribble
divined in pink-milky pen—: *pick a number*
(twenty-dumb) *pick your color* (empurpled, or
whatever shade a phlebotomist will puncture against)
the number again—dance a fingersequence
quickstep to floating calligraphy: fates I've ouija'd
myself: body that will summon the fox—my wild—
every twenty-eight days: a game of double-dutch
played in this treetrunk—the half-children wait their turn.