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Lip Prints: Fuse my Genes With Fish Scales

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CHRISTINA MORTELLARO

Lip Prints: Fuse My Genes With Fish Scales

You are a matryoshka half, a hull, under my ribs—
I built your portrait with red

kisses. Pink flowers
your hairline—my vermilion borders overlap,

they blend smooth. I color your curls
ombre. I could never melt enough crayons,

whirl them with petroleum to make the right shade
for your irises. I purple them

instead with puckered burgundy. I blot dark
rouge in the cove, once beating, now flat

between your clavicle & neck. I could scoop you out
like a grapefruit, pack pulp between my rolled tongue,

place my head in your concave rind. Your fingers rest
on my hips like the rhythm of splashing water.