

LISETTE ALONSO

El Diablo

Once, my mother was possessed by a demon.

She'd had too much wine when a balding Santero tried to invoke the spirit of her dead grandmother. Instead, the disembodied rage of a murdered pig farmer swooped in on a puff of cigar smoke and settled inside her rib cage.

All night long, it pitched her to and fro, squeezing her heart and whipping her against plaster walls until the wiry priest strapped her to a chair and prayed over her till the sun rose.

“Or maybe I just had a seizure,” she said. “It can be hard to tell sometimes.”