

	<i>full-time jobs</i>	<i>the snow had hid the train tracks</i>	<i>bedside goodbyes</i>
<i>my mother</i>	My mother had wanted me to become a railroad conductor when I grew up. "Look at that," she said when I was born. My father had dutifully looked. "Look at that," she repeated, taking me from the doctor and struggling into an upright position. A railroad conductor had saved her life once, when she was a child. She had been standing too close to the tracks and a stout man red in the face yelled at her to get away from there. "That is the face of a railroad conductor."	Unfortunately, my passion lay in chiropractic, and thus I joined a long and illustrious history of physical therapists, osteopaths, chiropractors, and Turkish bath masseurs. I renamed myself after a famous masseur whose name I read in the newspaper of a woman sitting across from me. He had died in an accident on the Trans-Siberian. The snow had covered the tracks with its lovely whiteness, he told the witness as she crouched by the red stain upon the landscape, and he had not realized they were there until there was no longer any time for regrets.	I could not sleep one night, so I asked my mother for a ghost story, and she told me she forgave me. Her creativity had always been lacking.
<i>she asks me to try, for her</i>	The chiropractic tables looked like colorful pill-bugs, curled up in varying degrees. They started at five thousand three hundred dollars. I took a part-time job at a nearby train station to pay for it. My mother wept tears of joy.	The woman came to me seven nights in a row. She knocked on the door to my clinic as I was about to close; claimed that she had come from very far away. "I can't sleep," she said, and lied down on my chiropractic table. "I can't help you," I said, and she looked at me and I looked at her like some kind of dreadful collision in the making, and I told her to get the fuck out.	
<i>leave it for the ghosts</i>	MY HANDS SPEAK FOR ME BECAUSE EVERY HORRIBLE WORD THAT FALLS FROM MY LIPS IS A CURSE. I HAD BELIEVED "HAUNTING" TO BE A MORE BEAUTIFUL DESCRIPTION BUT A CURSE IS A CURSE ALL THE SAME AND THE LIVING DO NOT "HAUNT."	The woman came to me in a dream seven nights in a row. She held my hands in hers; said, <i>did you know? I think we could be happy together</i> and I found I could not say anything in reply. I told her that my mother had wanted me to be a train conductor and she looked at me with a fleeting disappointment that passed me by like headlights outside my bedroom window.	I got a parking ticket once. My mother said I should have taken the train and we both looked out the window at the same time. Snow fell in the distance, but it was not here, not yet. My mother asked to be buried by the railroad tracks where she had almost died. She is buried behind my clinic instead. I stand in the tall grass and twist my hips and crack my joints and think, now this is haunting.