

Blue City

APRIL 1, 2020: PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

it's never been ramp season in a pandemic before, at least not in my memory. i am dreaming of my home, of traversing hill and holler, scanning the forest floor for a glimpse of a green omen in my line of sight; walking closer only to find that i had mistaken a patch of bluebells not yet bloomed for what i sought; walking further, to those sacred secret spots that hold the promise of silky green ribbons rising up from the soil; digging around the bulb and cutting above the root to encourage the ramps of the future; the promise of dirt under my fingernails and an old mesh potato bag filled with bounty; of eating ramps on everything imaginable til the season runs out and then some.

west virginia feels worlds away, and though i can reconcile a season lost to this all with promises of springs to come, it feels like the year will somehow be longer without this benchmark of time passing. seems as if the solstice isn't official without a first forage. i marvel at how long other alliums take to grow, how ramps seem to pop up overnight like a pungent present from a primordial pantheistic god. i revel in my celestial ramp sweat, wear my stinking sheen with pride, and everyone in town greets each other with acrid and happy hellos that emanate from mouths that elate to exclaim that "we have made it through another winter!" with zip-locked evidence in hand. i am dreaming of my home, of traversing hill and holler, searching for an ease to the ache of the city with its hard and barren surfaces sprawling for what feels like centuries. 🍷