

## Is Your Country a He or a She in Your Mouth

Patricia Lockwood

Mine is a man I think, I love men, they call me  
a fatherlandsexual, all the motherlandsexuals  
have been sailed away, and there were never  
any here in the first place, they tell us. Myself  
I have never seen a mountain, myself I have  
never seen a valley, especially not my own,  
I am afraid of the people who live there,  
who eat hawk and wild rice from my pelvic  
bone. Oh no, I am fourteen, I have walked  
into my motherland's bedroom, her body  
is indistinguishable from the fatherland  
who is "loving her" from behind, so close  
their borders match up, except for a notable  
Area belonging to the fatherland. I am drawn  
to the motherland's lurid sunsets, I am reaching  
my fingers to warm them, the people in my  
valley are scooping hawk like crazy, I can no  
longer tell which country is which, salt air off  
both their coasts, so gross, where is a good nice gulp  
of Midwestern pre-tornado? The tornado above me  
has sucked up a Cow, the motherland declares,  
the tornado above him has sucked up a Bull,  
she says pointing to the fatherland. But the cow  
is clearly a single cow, chewing a single cud  
of country, chewing their countries into one,  
and "I hate these country!" I scream, and  
their eyes shine with rain and fog, because  
at last I am using the accent of the homeland,  
at last I am a homelandsexual and I will never  
go away from them, there will one day be two  
of you too they say, but I am boarding myself  
already, I recede from their coasts like a Superferry

packed stem to stern with citizens, all waving hellos  
and goodbyes, and at night all my people go below  
and gorge themselves with hunks of hawk,  
the traditional dish of the new floating heartland.

— 選自 *Motherland Fatherland Homelandsexuals* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014).