

# DRO

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## Tooth

It's humid, the air thick and drinkable, a wet moustache lining her upper lip. She searches for the sliver space between two back molars, finding the sharpness of the bone edge, and levering. A wince of pain but it's satisfying and she pushes harder, wedging the meatiness of her tongue under the tooth, feeling the ridges of its underbody. There's a small crack as some sinew or nerve snaps, the rip of gum, and her mouth fills with the taste of metal and salt. She spits it out, a calcium pearl on the dresser, then drops it into a bottle wrapped with instruction: Take Me. Later, as she waits for sleep, she watches a shadow in the doorframe from under thin cotton sheets, waiting for it to move towards the tiny piece of her body that is no longer needed. Her breath is hot and alive against the fabric, and in the moments before she gives into the underwater shapes of dream, she sees a smile without a face. Morning brings an empty doorway; a missing bottle; and a dark stain of blood on the pillow.