

## Sands from Bermuda

I was told once that the wind carries sands from the Sahara across The Continent to its coast, then from its coast and across the ocean. For a grain of sand, the desert is infinity and then the ocean infinity again. When you're in the air for as long as a grain of sand traveling twice across infinity, the novelty of flight wears off after about one thousand sunsets. Sometimes I think of all of the grains of sand in the sky, on their odysseys, who have forgotten they belong to the desert. Another day, another infinity. I was brought up on pink sand, not the orange kind of my father's home. Sitting with my neck on the edge of the kitchen sink, I'd fight cramps while my mother scrubbed pink particles from my scalp after a day at the beach. Tender loving—she would tell me that for every pink grain she'd find, there'd also be an orange one. To distract my pain, she'd tell me the story of the wind and how it carried sand from the Sahara, twice across infinity, and directly to my scalp for her to scrub. She would stretch her storytelling and tell me of my father's father who, after playing outside, in the same trifling way, tracked the desert back into his mother's house. My father would always tease me that no matter how hard I shook my head, there'd always be an equal amount of orange grains left behind, housed there between strands, for every pink grain my mother managed to rid my hair of.

The orange grains of sand were from my father's desert, the pink ones from the beach, but the hair both were found in, came from my mother's mother. That was the wind's beauty, the way it carried sand into my grandmother's hair. She's met the desert through me, I'm reminded of each time my mother pulls too fondly on the strands connected to my tender head. As a child, I'd go to the beach and collect pink particles in my fingers. I'd hold them as tightly as my hair was coiled, and on a hurricane day, I'd take this pink pile of the unknown and release it to the swells, in the direction of infinity. I'd hope that one grain of sand would be steadfast enough to venture past its thousandth sunset. I wanted one grain of myself to

make its way back to the desert without knowing it ever belonged anywhere else. Maybe somewhere in the sands of Sudan, lodged in the same dunes my grandfather trifled in, there's a pink particle without its memory.