

## Grocery List

Maia Joy

my mother always knows exactly  
what i want for dinner. she used to  
call this “maternal telepathy,” but now  
she calls it instead a “lucky guess.”

she can tell exactly what kind of week i’m having  
based on what i silently add to the grocery list—  
she knows, for example, that if i’ve listed “apples,”  
she must also bring home peanut butter; if i’ve  
listed “mediterranean mint Talenti (5)” and  
“that really good soft cheese that comes in a tub”  
and “dinosaur chicken nuggets,”  
she must also bring home tampons.  
if i’ve listed “swedish meatballs,” she must also  
take me to IKEA and hold my body up as we wait  
in line, cart full of particleboard furniture,  
colorful pillows resembling oversized human  
appendages, and tiny potted plants, to buy  
one-dollar ice cream cones that we will inevitably  
eat in the car, quietly, while she tries to  
figure out what is wrong, before asking me to turn on  
my Disney playlist (she will tell me that  
she wants to listen to it, but we will both know  
that this is actually for me, and we will sing along  
until the car rattles as it blazes down the highway  
and the clouds overhead turn back into water).

she stockpiles tissues on pallets in the garage,  
enough to soak up a small tsunami should one  
happen to spontaneously invade our landlocked home,  
so that we will never run out if a rainy day comes  
before her next trip to the store. when i wasn’t looking,  
she purchased a second freezer  
for the sole purpose of storing chicken wings,  
popsicles, and cold cuts, just in case i decide  
that i would like a mortadella sandwich.

Maia Joy is a queer biracial poet and musician from Boston, MA. A two-time Silver Key recipient from the Massachusetts Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, she is currently studying music and creative writing at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she is a member of the Jimenez-Porter Writers' House. Some of her work can be found in *Star 82 Review* and *JFA*

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