

after

junior cuts the telephone wire, steady, sure-handed.

leila clips the chains around the front gate, feather-weight, aflight.

shelly cackles, rubs at the greasepaint on her face.
her eyes peer out at me, diamonds sunk deep within a pool of mud.

i follow them down the winding drive, eyes lowered and trained on the ground in front of me.

i listen for sounds.

and then i hear them:

gunshots.

i try to stop listening. to shut out the sounds. to quiet the fever.

but by now it is too late.

blood

leila may see through people, right to the core of their darkness. she was the one i watched out for, in the beginning. the one i always felt was watching *me*.

but shelly?

shelly has no mercy, no core at all. she is hollow. infinite.

shelly is the one who has actually tasted blood.

shelly is the one who craved it.