

JOELLE BIELE

A Hat for Katie

It must have flowers, big ones, peonies and hydrangeas, poms
as big as your hand, packed so tight bees get lost in their yellow,

tipsy buzzing, spiders knit with a dismantled chandelier, and when
you shake your head the crystals make a music only lonely dogs

can hear. We can add piano keys if you want so when you turn
your head it's as if you dragged seven scales. Some of the flowers

will turn with the sun, others the moon, the cats will come to inspect,
to which you should hold up your hand like the cashier at Krispy Kreme

and then politely but firmly, in your very best French, tell them,
"No." Your hat can be a bowl you've dug out of the cabinet,

a shoebox that sometimes doubles as a drum (useful when the captain
shouts,
"Bail!") If it's a lampshade, you may *borrow* my maracas, if it's a frisbee,

do not toss it through the golden ring. It should have a detachable shade
when you're closed for the night, it can double as a cape, "Olé!"

I want it to stay on when you run through Pamplona, I want you to outrun
your bad dreams. Let it bubble like seltzer, let it glow like a worm,

let it take you wherever you want, impenetrable like an undersea helmet
good for twenty-thousand leagues or for donning on Mars (where you once

said you're from). I'll get the goggles and oxygen tank, the suitcase
in the attic, the life preservers in the barn. I know, Earth's all wrong.

We'll set up in the driveway with the blasters. I'll wave the fire extinguisher,
tell the neighbors to back away. Let me be your driver and bell-hop, let us

take a tour bus through space, just don't leave me here, my lovely—
How could you know— Without you, I'd forget how to breathe.