

## Wind Phone

*In the small town of Otsuchi in northern Japan, 2,000 residents were lost in the tsunami in 2011.*

*One resident, who had already been grieving his cousin before the tsunami hit, had the idea of placing an old phone booth at the bottom of his garden with a disconnected rotary phone. He would ring his cousin's number and his words would "be carried on the wind" as he spoke to him.*

-BBC News

I built a small phonebooth in the garden like a grave, as if I could talk to the dead. In the center, I buried your old corded phone up to its base and hummed a dial tone into the ovals of its mouth. I didn't bother to wire anything, and instead I curled myself around the beige body sticking up from the ground. I'm listening, I whispered, I'm here. I pushed my hand into the dirt, dialing your number into the perlite. I cupped my hands over my mouth and trilled my voice, wondering what I could even say if you answered. Hello, I miss you. Hello, come find me. Hello, every word is on fire, my throat is tight, my hands cannot hold your voice in them. I'd even take the answering machine, just to hear you say that you missed my call, that you would return. The receiver wet with dew and tears, I had so much to tell you about the nothing of my days. Can you hear me, I asked. Can you tell me some part of my voice makes it into the soil, tell me that the roots shudder with questions I only now thought to ask. Tell me to keep waiting, tell me you will notice if I eventually hang up the receiver, disconnect the phone, and take down the walls I had built myself.