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“Forgive Me For Not Understanding

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that you have always been one of us…” is the last thing Kerchak says before he dies at the end of Tarzan. If it takes too long to clasp a necklace, I feel dramatic. I even hum like you. My entire childhood I wanted to eat the chocolate cake. I misunderstood. I thought when the principal said the cook made it with her blood and sweat she was speaking literally. That blood was in the chocolate, and it still looked so oily and delicious. Porco dio! My poems are days off to me. Sometimes I have to decide: to twist, to fatten, to scatter, to flatten, to gather. “Gasoline fattens between our teeth.” Rancid butter shrieks all over my house! I ate something painful. I too am writing poems for people taller than me, thank God. I like your flashing glasses.

A. R. ZARIF is from Chicago. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in BOAAT, Foundry, Muzzle Magazine, Frontier Poetry, NECK, Two Peach, Ninth Letter, Cosmonauts Avenue, The Puritan, Bennington Review, and The Offing. He holds an MFA from Brown University.