

POETRY

On an island far away

by Lisa Süß



"soft boom" by Carey deVictoria-Michel.

On an island

far away

cliffs fall

into the sea

with the kind of

beauty that's hard to

cope with when you're an

atheist.

The only development are condos

etched into the walls

by rabbits.

Every summer puffins move in

after a winter at sea.

Do the birds force out the rabbits with their red beaks?

Or are the rabbits renting out their units?

Charging extra for burrows with a view

of confetti bombs

exploding

from the rock –

thousands of gannets, white birds with

black wingtips like soft ice cream

dipped into chocolate.

While I contemplate whether the rabbits are slumlords

or victims of seasonal gentrification,

I open a muesli bar:

dark chocolate,

macadamia,

cranberry.

I marvel at the beauty and decadence involved in

farming,

harvesting,

assembling

those ingredients

just so a girl can pick up a package of four

snack-sized bars for 2 pounds 40 at the supermarket and eat one

on the edge
of a windswept cliff.

I carefully put the plastic wrapper
into my pocket.

100 miles off this coast an
oil rig extracts
black gold from the
ocean floor.

I walk along the cliff,
the ground like a trampoline.

A man walks by with a Tesco bag,
nods, "You all right?"
without expecting an answer.

If I had said no,
would he have opened his Tesco bag and
fed me Walkers crisps like a
modern-day elf
appearing to lost wanderers?

I tally the number of puffins I spotted today.
9.

A coping mechanism of our time
deprived of
gods
and
elves.

Counting.

Quantifying.

Organising the world into
snack
sized
plastic
packages.