

Waiting for the volcano

by [Eliza Griswold](#) in the [November 13, 2013](#) issue

Our high-speed hydrofoil is late.
We wait in the island's worst places,
Aeolian churches. Bartholomew,
the aging patron saint, drapes
his flayed skin over one arm,
a sommelier or thespian.
Harrowing renders us raw,
unclods soil and frees a captive field.
The boatman hectors lesbians,
insists on learning where they swim.
I'm glad you don't understand
the Italian that I barely can.
There's nowhere on this island
that doesn't turn us more
against ourselves or one another—
too many days in paradise
for minds like ours.