

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.