

On de-extinction

by [Loretta Watts](#) in the [August 26, 2020](#) issue

Scientists try to resurrect an extinct Australian frog by implanting cells in a related living species. —National Geographic

She's rock-sitting in my mind's eye
beneath a riverine gallery of eucalyptus,
the platypus frog defunct. She swallows her
own glistening eggs. Strange stomach

that serves as womb. Clever the chemical
blocking acid that would digest her young as
so much caviar. She'll not eat again while
they grow inside. Belly bloated, lungs collapsed,

she breathes through moist skin.
Startled by researchers in rain, vomits up
six perfect froglets, guts turned out
like an emptied pocket. Ravaged by a fungus

running rampant in the amphibian world,
she's gone the way of Martha—last passenger pigeon.
May come back, Lady Lazarus of frogs,
the Gastric Brooder revived like the dreamed

return of the Woolly Mammoth. And we,
selves stacked within selves like nesting dolls.
What finely articulated, if invisible beings,
may be birthed out our silent mouths agape?