



## Small Altars

**Keli Stewart**

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Along with her BA from Columbia College and an MFA from Chicago State University, Keli Stewart earned artist fellowships from Hedgebrook and the Augusta Savage Gallery Arts International Residency. Her work has appeared in *Quiddity*, *Meridians*, *Hip Mama*, and numerous other journals and publications.

*a way to get born*

*grandma tied a towel around my belly, tight enough to girdle blackened  
stomach. breasts too, to get milk out. she folded me like a sheet  
or a soldier's death flag. cotton. creases. kin. this is how she would  
prepare my body. i'm a swaddled baby, a woman in a ghost sheet,  
sexless, breasts collapsing underneath gauze, milk pushing through.  
my soiled spots look like buttons of spray paint. i want us touching.  
i want him to feel his mama. when i hold him, he roots at my wish breasts.*

MATT SUTHERLAND (July / August 2021)

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