

Sybil Baker

# WHEN WE WERE GIRLS

We were by the river having tea, licking the icing off our cupcakes until the good part was gone. My sister was accessorized as usual, with her tin foil hat shaped like a boat and earworm necklace she ate like brain candy. I wore spider-web gloves and a garland of wasp's wings. Her hair skimmed her feet, mine my elbows. I was no competition for her. She removed her hat and placed it in the river. I laced my garland around her boat. After she climbed aboard she was supposed to unfurl her hair to make a carpet for me to join her, but there was only room for one of us, as usual. As it would be for the rest of our lives. She sailed away, foil glinting in the sun. I pretended to wave goodbye with my spider-web hands, and she pretended not to notice.