



PROJECT MUSE®

On Being Tongue-Tied, and Nothing Else

Lujain Almulla

Appalachian Heritage, Volume 46, Number 1, Winter 2018, p. 104 (Article)

Published by The University of North Carolina Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/aph.2018.0016>



➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/725154>

ON BEING TONGUE-TIED, AND NOTHING ELSE

Then, there was language you could taste.
Words printed on every lingual papilla—
Welcomed in by pursed plum lips
Mouthing *O's*.

It was language that had a breathy flavor that stuck
Like dew
On the titillating sound waves of
A sweet-talking drawl.
Curse it, that language
That wedged itself between my teeth—
A braille for a swirling tongue to read,
Le tchip, le tchip, curse it.

At first, it tasted
Of muscadine raindrops, pitter-pattering
On the bitten insides of my cheeks.
At last—of bitter collarbone gnawed raw.

It was prose that couldn't be savored—
The synergy of his soft-spoken la-di-das,
His viscous laughter—
O, toothsome tongue-tying language, O!

LUJAIN ALMULLA