

Red Rooms

Alicia Adams

You wish you had been born from your father's head. Like Athena. When you picture Athena in the womb of Zeus's skull, you picture her in a hollow red room with no corners. You picture her curled in a ball and growing larger, fully clothed with battle gear, spear stuck behind her father's eye, a migraine pulsing. When you picture your own father's head, you picture it crowded. But you could have curled around the deep-set grooves of gray matter, your tiny hands pressed against his frontal cortex and into his dreams. And when you were ready, you could have stood on your shoed feet and pushed up and hard with rhythmic contractions until your father, unable to take it any longer, found a way to open himself and let you out. You think about this often. In the back of your own mind, dark and polluted, you can feel a tumor growing. One that will ripen and mutate, killing you slowly, and with little effort.



Alicia Adams is graduating from Cal State Long Beach with an MFA in Fiction in May 2010. Her first chapbook *In the Orchard of the Poison Apples and Other Stories* is forthcoming through Noble Swine Press. You can listen to her fiction and nonfiction radio show, *Prose and Cons*, on the World Wide Word Radio Network. She enjoys cephalopods and most creatures with more than four limbs. Her turn-ons include cannibalism and veganism (made possible with human-flavored tofu). She rarely matches socks and thinks glasses are a state of mind. She doesn't envy the 20/20s but fears the day she will eventually go blind.