

*Researchers Find Mice Pass On Trauma to  
Subsequent Generations*

Even before I was born, before my father  
took my mother's head in his hands,  
her black curls like sprockets  
sprung from his palms, & held her face  
under the lukewarm water of our tub,  
her belly a heavy globe—my only  
armor—pressed against that bright white  
porcelain, before I took my first breath  
two months after my father failed  
to cinch it, her, I mastered a palpable fear  
of choking. It's all a mind game, Dad  
would say, shoving another M&M  
in my mouth: swallow. Pseudodysphagia—  
even before I learned the word I knew  
the shame that came from fearing  
fear rooted in the fiction of my mind—hers  
& hers & hers & hers.