

Leah Souffrant

Reading Simone Weil

I pick it up sometimes and put the book back down, face up on the shelf.

Afraid of its yellow pages, its penciled underlinings. I know something about reading that book. About eating beauty. I finger the pages

As if the pulpy texture is braille, read a phrase, her clause, turn away. Force my chin over my shoulder before I can let a whole sentence in. Seeking leads us astray. Never a whole page.

I know something about eating beauty. I put my hand

On the cover and close the book. Attention is creative. I put it back on the shelf, on the pile of books, face up. Those are my pencil lines. I know how to pay attention.

I read the book once. I take the book up, and I stop. What chokes, this reckless stopping. That

Textured paper, the penciled lines, the edge of the pages a bit softer each time.