

On de-extinction

by [Loretta Watts](#) in the [August 26, 2020](#) issue

*Scientists try to resurrect an extinct Australian frog by implanting cells in a related living species.* —National Geographic

She's rock-sitting in my mind's eye  
beneath a riverine gallery of eucalyptus,  
the platypus frog defunct. She swallows her  
own glistening eggs. Strange stomach  
that serves as womb. Clever the chemical  
blocking acid that would digest her young as  
so much caviar. She'll not eat again while  
they grow inside. Belly bloated, lungs collapsed,  
she breathes through moist skin.  
Startled by researchers in rain, vomits up  
six perfect froglets, guts turned out  
like an emptied pocket. Ravaged by a fungus  
running rampant in the amphibian world,  
she's gone the way of Martha—last passenger pigeon.  
May come back, Lady Lazarus of frogs,  
the Gastric Brooder revived like the dreamed  
return of the Woolly Mammoth. And we,  
selves stacked within selves like nesting dolls.  
What finely articulated, if invisible beings,  
may be birthed out our silent mouths agape?