

## don't say that

By Lourdes Ixtzai Castillo Silva

if your mind were an oyster that I had to shuck  
I would surely slit my thumb as I tried to open up  
rigid shell, toothy layers, edged like new knives  
pointed outward, keeping hidden the soft pink inside

small sawteeth that bite and draw blood-  
pointed feet that crawl their way out of your trachea  
climb down and shit and piss in the corner by the bed  
and kneel in the nave of "that's not what I said."

Helen launched a thousand ships  
and Malinche tamed a war  
yet here inside my room I sit  
shedding tears over a slur