

“All of this was made with a lot of pleasure despite various feelings of terror, grief and worry. El Niño never came, my mom died, the cops shot over 500 people. And that’s just the tip of the iceberg. No more icebergs. This is just the tip of death’s boney middle finger. If I could say one thing, I’d tell you that scientifically speaking, snakes only ever eat their own tails when they are having a severe anxiety attack due to heatstroke. The snakes eating their tails here aren’t necessarily spiritual symbols or references to the mystical “Ouroboros.” They are self-destructing in a hot panic. While the image of a snake eating its tail has been used to refer to the cyclical nature of life and death, to eternity and the infinite in many cultures—from Greek, Indian, Norse and South American mythology to systems of thought in Alchemy and Yoga—the ancient Egyptian idea of a circling “formless disorder that surrounds the orderly world and is involved in that world’s periodic renewal” seems to most closely reflect the wildness of worry, especially that which is brought on by hostile environmental conditions. Severe drought; the unregulated heat of citizen disempowerment in a two-party system seemingly air-locked with no cross-stream; love and family in late capitalism atomizing the body-mind connection faster than you can say dialectic. It’s getting hot in here. Tail in mouth, we are eating the wrong thing.”

—Stanya Kahn, 2016