

my nightstand. I mean that I can reach for it easily, and, for a little while, I can fall into a life that is someone else's. That's what it feels like now, someone else's life.

"We'd broken for lunch," I say. "I was ahead of him in line, and when I handed him a plate he said, 'Are you my apocalypse?'"

"What?" Trever says.

"That's what I heard," I say, "but he actually said, 'How about these tacos?'"

Trever laughs and then chokes it back. I take a moment to notice that his hair is graying, it isn't noticeable, not really, but if you look you can see it. I know what he would think of me if I gave him back his letters, if I told him I'd known. I know how it would make me look. I'd allowed him to feel close to me, he'd say, only to spring this trap on him? And to what end? How to explain that this was not it at all, that it was I who had allowed myself to feel close to him, and that this was everything. Someone else. Someone new. I understand what you did more than I would have admitted to you. Youth fades. I remember when you said that. I'd convinced you to do edibles, and after we had sex I put my head on your arm and you said, "Youth fades." And I said that maybe for you it did. And you said, "We're getting old," and I said, "Isn't that the point?" and you didn't say anything to that. "Getting old together, I mean," I added, aware this wasn't something I'd usually say.

"Is it?" you said.

And then I reached beneath the blanket and grabbed you and said, "It's not the only point."

You smiled.

Trever apologizes again for laughing, and I wipe my eyes with my sleeve. "It's fine," I say, and it is. Truly.

**Evan White** is a graphic designer. In 2016, his story "Patterson" received an honorable mention in *Glimmer Train's* Short Story Award contest. He co-edited and published an anthology of poetry and short fiction entitled *All the Vegetarians in Texas Have Been Shot*, and currently serves as the art director and designer for *Under the Gum Tree* magazine in Sacramento, California.

## JOÃO DE BRITO

*Exonome*, 2018  
Oil on canvas, 48 x 36 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST