

A chair ; once sat
Limbs were held and skin folded
Bodies and bones and faces
Names, carried upon the stool ; once were

The air stood stagnant around her, fixating
itself to the walls surrounding the iron bed.
The plaster began to pucker and swell, paper
peeling towards her, as if to speak solemnly
within her ear.

Am I a home? A nest? A space?
Or an object, thwart and pulled and twisted
Housing a mind, cracked fragments

She clung to chaos like grit beneath the nail
Tearing at the crevices where her
fingers lay and deeply sunk into
the pores of who she once was
Sap hung heavy and low, bowing under the
weight of the saturation surrounding it.
Don't weep willow, I know it's too heavy
to carry. Eroding on the shore along the
line of sand and patter of sandy feet. She
was a girl that seemed to float through
the streets with a hapless breeze, but
deep beneath her rose exterior you could
taste the metallic bitterness of fury that
hummed in her blood, pain that pattered
into parts of her she would never reveal.

Lowly crevices laid bare in a humble
hillside heather bracken twisting
amongst the gooseberry bush

I don't want to be hard
With a twisted wire mind and closed stone fists
Walls that have
Let me sink into you, into myself

- - Am I here?! Am I here? Hands.
pushed to the side, pressing like a glass
box, a wall between mind and reality.
Gasps heavy and helpless. What is here?
What is here? Is this it? Let me be. Here.

Throw it all away, crush the sides
P E E L back the layers
The box tumbled
Scratch and scream

Burn the place where you hide
Suffocate on ash and embers
Rebuild from the ground up
And watch

I found you at the bottom of the well
Bowed at the alter

The sky hung heavy, solemnly swaying,
levitating like a noose from a birch branch

The shade was sweeter than red, but with a
sharp edge you couldn't quite taste. The colour
of dawn, but seeped slightly with fear. The grey
almost seemed like a comfort, solid and familiar,
against the vibrance of this new morning sky.

“Lean in,” she said
“Lean in, and let go”

We sat, three woman, and I
Those I've held those I've loved
And our loins ached for the loss
A loss of a dream
A loss of ourselves
And realised in our hands were the
feelings we shared, the feelings we had
Empty palms, together

I ache I burn I contract

When your spine turns rigid I'll unleaf the pages
left behind

Embedded in white
Heavy and held but free and infinite
All at once
- sinking into my bones, as, the,
cartilage cracked
Breathe

I wanted more than this
I wanted your world
Your palm encased mine,
and my fingers held you back
Your lips spoke sweet words
as my mind began to untangle
The walls began to crack as flowers
crept in, but you left, unbloom

xvi.

Make a home out of me

Carve out the space between
my lungs and rest your head
Lay on my chest, weary next to the burnished
fire, I'll open windows, close the doors
Low in the evening, when the sun settles beneath
windows panes, that's when I'll hold you
Quiet, be still, you are safe within my walls

Can I spit the words out of
my lungs in a venomous stare
Can I bite? And rip? And tear?
Body / apart
Can I stand tall and broad before
I crumble down below your knees
Bitter words folding into your lips like butter
Hold on / hold strong / flailing wrists
Punches collapse into the air, that night

“I thought I knew,” the words clung like peeling bark rotting away from her throat. “I thought I knew the answer, I thought if I kept moving, it would make sense, in the end, but what if?”

She took one step forward.

The little girl had always longed to be a bird. She wore a slightly bemused smirk beneath a feathered fringe, but held a look of absense, dull beaneath her raven black eyes. She smiled.

Her body felt so weary, armour worn over a
corpse, limbs like lead and trembling beneath
an exhaustion heavier than she had ever known.

I can't fight this anymore.

But what, I ask, are you fighting?

This, the world, the battle, all the injustice at my
ankles, the pain.

Who?

- -
Myself

Crack your bones, kneeling at my alter
Wrists open, repent for your sins
Raise your chest
/ / palms open
Gospel chants fall from your throat
Bring me to your church \ pray

Petrol under nails , beneath this golden hour
afterglow
I shall teach, cried the voices from the pews, I
shall speak and I shall see
Coloured paper, crinkled in sweaty palms
Soaked to the skin, as we open our mouths,
soles pressed into mud

To vanish, is that what you want from me?
But I shall carve my name into the banister,
gutted wood under knife to remain a part of you
Settle, lightly on the mantle, leaving a trace, a
shadow of a statue, watching
Recorded within the room, wood-stained,
my misguided movements and shapes on the
sideboard
Maybe I shall creep through the grain of
the floorboards and howl winds in the attic,
slumbering beneath your white curtains and
crooked panes - restless night, dear

The sky peeled back, tearing
clouds from the limbs of the azure
Ripping moments from the air, tumbling into
the blue expanse and tripping into my lungs
That night the moon changed, it took
over, as exposed we became, cowering

Open space ; , open sound

Galloping into tongues and hearts
as blue soared above over eyes ,
brown and milky / soft and warm

Like time ;
the clocks

Tick

Tick

Tick

Tick Tock

Throat

Clock

Tick

- tock

Stamped, on my shell ; moments
been ; past or now

it was a heavy, humid day - we stood
balanced on the broken ground,
tall oaks folding over the five of us,
as silence fell ;

The past that was, the weight of it all, escaped as
a hidden breath.

Mourning the days we once had, the
happiness tainted into our lips and the
moments that grasped our timeline,
moulding into all we know now
It was love, hanging in the air, a bitter,
bruised, bellowing love for the family
we were /a/las; what we are now

A crushed corpse, wilting stems and a tumbled broken stone are what we offered in palms to the pilgrimage. The thick corn rose and whispered, “you can’t escape the powdered grit within your past - soot rests beneath your nails and dust lingers heavy in your lungs. Embers become ash. Breathe it all in.” - patter .

Can I close the book on this dog
earred chapter, I beg? With his blood
stained pages and crinkled edges
I read it in fall, rethumbed in spring,
words repeated on my lips, bruised, bitten

we will open our eyes ; dawn will creep in
between the blinds, cracked moments of light
slips in hinges of time
as we rest, be open ; be still
and, we will , stand palm unfurling
we will, bathe in that sun ; awoken

T r e m b l i n g
 Tumbling ;
T u m b l i n g
 T r e m b l i n g
 t r i p p i n g

into my throat, stars on stools, placed in a palm
Let me land on sheets, sunlight through
window panes and dust covered springs

Ropeburn, clinged to the noose, redemption
Clapsed hand to chin, rest palm to chest

I don't know what I expected you from you
; when small feet pressed into the shiny brown
tongues of your leather polished brogues

M a n ,
in soft shirt and red silk tie
Smelling of grass, or leather
soap, not home, but my home
Wellingtons and bike wheel spins,
soil embedded in the rut of your nails
You were Saturday mornings and
the smell of coffee - rustling papers
In the way your eyes flickered, timid, unsure
I can hear it all now, radio dials seeping
through car windows, cricket bats and finches

Small boy, briefcase and thread bear ;

I embodied the sun for you
Became ablaze, alive
Wilted the moon who lived behind my eyes
Until I was an ember

Hello there, boy, with the honey heart and brown bear eyes. Play with your wit and your burnished brass ball, laugh and spin and drag me under your cloth into a cave filled with stars. Collect / smiles and silver eyes , never let this world hurt you and your side eyed smirk.

cup, placed in palm
unfurl my spine
break my bones to build your bed
lay finger tip within my root
fill me, overflow into lakes
a body of water
empty nest
take ; me ; home

howl into the hollow moon of my heart
brazen, and bold
she is I, I am she
in the bitterness, sliced by breath
alone from the pack, she runs

Lay a place at your table
Let me sit my your side
Bend, fold, bow, contort
As throats clenched together
And swallow bitter beneath tense jaws

-

-

expanse, swallow soul and fleeting seconds

b r e a k i n g

and breaking

and breaking

crushed

skull

Palms, outstretched, clasping
Hands, hands, hands ; a body ; my own
Throat shackled, wide eyed
Unfurl clenched fingers towards the other
Those, reaching, grasp wrist to wrist ; and hold ;
together

between, apart
crescent of the morning
as the space between breathes
quicken, but no one hears

; ; : watching, he stood as stones tumble
stoic, perched patiently
through panes and moments
- we applauded
this was the hour to stop : watch

lichen bu-i-l-d-s : becomes
as tides turn and sunlight set
seconds lost / moments
(everything w e c o u l d b e)

space between slates we sat
throats cascaded in stagnant air
we / were / broken / a / part
perched within lines and moments
mourning ; the touch ; the longing

mesmerised &::: melodic
seconds between : to be seen

when palm rest on hip

placed at the bow, three parcels (gifts) wrapped
in string ; a book, a seed, a heart carved in stone

meek, you cowered (beneath deck)
 inviting in the storm
 hiding under your lies, your
 betrayal, your weakness
clenched fists grasp the wheel
anchor pulled
from under hull/heart; (taken)
waves dragged below, drowned
ore stabbed through chest
 one (i) left in the shards of the wreckage
 empty
 my body recast, lungs choking (a homeage)
grasping for redemption on shore line
 offering forgiveness where it shouldn't be
 dealt, in return for a soul (mine)
 a moment of calm, I beg

a broken mirage, I love still
(*you tore my boat in two ; three*)
we came in innocence / tenderness

 I, a corpse - abandoned
shipwreck
 let go

sat, at glass : a day
light goes past, condensed between panes
body folded, and growing
lungs tightened smaller ; smaller
cascaded within a t o m b
embalmed ; encased - my own downfall

box of glass - shell of concrete
safety, safety
weighted ankles \ strangled chest
suffocated within soft cuffs
this is not my home
built from the rubble - my grave

It's not you that I am here for ;; not you, but
moments

Safe in bones and skin, carving distance
 between
my self and my thoughts
I kissed your forehead, but not for love
For I do not need you, so I shall let you go
 For I want you ; for why ;
for not wanting myself

Helpless pleas, to touch to touch
But : you do not rip my limbs, destruction came
from your teeth
I need to be torn, to pieces to pieces - and so I
lay tip to temple, walk away

To become cowered under dust
Grey matter and a smouldered haze
Choked and buried, in this place I lay
To be here, to be in the corner of a mind ;;
Settle in this,
 settle in this home of despair and
 desperation
- for no one is coming, no one can hear

some days,
I don't believe my mother has a reflection

I don't know what it would show

mosaiced strength ; a tender dream
resentment of daughter
a gift of fire wrapped in gauze

I don't know those eyes (anymore;)
we both begged to be seen
love ; is not a book we can always read

although, my words are always marked in paper

a distance ; fear - mirrored back to one another
too much to face (woman)

Peeled, and peeled
How many layers of skin
Can rip at paper edges
Versions of self, becoming unwritten
How many closed fists, knives in throats
Can be swallowed before
Before
That is all
The stream of nothing, wordlessness
Laid before a gravestone
Empty cast, set shaking into a body of soot
Longing for nothing more than this
silence

h e l d , ;
a my body rattled within your carcass
carriages hurtling me from place to space ; to home

line ; line - balancing
grasped fists sinking barbed wire into palms
bordering the lines between nothing / all
e m p t i n e s s
haunted by stability
sliced wounds and twisted tales
the fear of the self ; who ; is ; this ; i
you - called - me
- keeping hold of something /;
nothing : abyss - guilt and brains, unfolding

- an ode to a /dis/order

Moments when heads couldn't be held
Nothing but notions of, bowing at feet of men
Did you see me? The fused ember burnished
into night
Held, in a way, safely turning swords to others

Redemption ; reprevial
Pin me against your barristers
Feed me to your judgement
I shall cast my body out for meat
When crow beaks tear at limbs
Take me down with words, drown on guilt
I betrayed the motherhood
Let the corpse be touched by men, not mine

I deserve nothing

Place gifts at my alter, dragging knees through
soil
Reflections with bitter edges and redemption
Cursing open wrists - snapped bones upon
broken backs

lay to rest upon your lap
take - me - down
keep - us - safe
like this / wrapped in your mind
it could feel / legs and palms
I didn't know / when we were
like a sycamore tree, sat under
all we were, all we could've been

suspended - between - slate roofs
and fragmentation \ years
Interior lives intertwined
time became just a mirror ball
we levitated
- are we just a spectacle?
sharing loneliness; longing
parted lips, to touch ((one day)
fingertips placed ; but the clock hands were a
dancer
and knuckles held stained bands
sun became moon ;; intoxicated - senseless
all of this written ; on a clasped book spine
back page, closed with grass leaf

Condensed footprints on windows
Golden light glow, time b e c o m e s
rustling-of-trees & howl of the sea
I lay : we lay
were what and what are
passages in time / held open
lapped up by light, a figment of mind

-

you are my sisters
buds blooming, blossomed ;
wept from the same water
bathed and shared, darkness :/ light
tears from eyes and hands grasped holy
planted beside
one another, growing - intertwining
you were there ; you are my life

the scales of a fish
scapel ; gutted flesh
sliced at the core
bones - tainted hue of /decay
snapped like twigs
a skeleton
- rib cage branches hooked around hearts
a moist rot, embedded
in unseen parts - to become a crater
grave ; grave ; grave (dig me up)
sunk corpse, turned inside out
dissected {empty}
an eye, caught

For I am made of March

In soil ; we plant
unfurled from frost - dawning skies
and broken rain does mist \ tears
fall to swim beneath aquamarine ocean
broken away from shimmered shoal / lost scaled
fish
(cave under the tide) ;; brought to shore
to the women of Mars
embedded in rust rock, crevices of home
taken hand in hand of my sisters
- our bloodstone rises (sing)
as I unfold from the palm of my grandmother
onto a bed of grass blades ; verdigris floor
Open the yellow buds - bring spring
as small cries break from cracked shell
root from seed awakes
I am my own
re:birth

Crumpled, chest heavy chest
with hollow eyes and lungs of tar
I have torn myself, ripped from jaw
to jaw and nail to nail, for the other
Pressed down under tooth
Air burns my lips, closed throat, burrowed heart

I-didn't-think-you'd-do-that-to_me
 suck my heart from throat
 torn apart
all I gave; *my flesh, my child, my love*
 for you \ to you
 to be taken for scrap metal
 we could've gone down in flames
 stood burning in the ashes : in dignity
but you buried me in soot - choked - me - alive
for I am just a child // and you loved me
 so you say | us as we could've been
 us - us - her (good bye) I love you

time chimes ; in your arms
we lay, sun on toes
safe, within - with you
fingers lock & necks bite
to be :: alone

innocence placed within a silent touch
- tainted : night fell
we fall, intoxicated - as lives tumble
chaos in the broken brick
rubble and dust, sat
friendship folded in book pages
lock :: us

let it fade ; until then - hold me

shredded-from-my-fingernails
tear me apart
I cannot be anything ; I'm nothing - forgive me
h o l l o w ; tainted within
I'm sorry - - redemption for not being enough ;
not whole ; broken segment
- for you?
heaviness levitated within the void, to be held ;
to be
yearning to - be full/be vibrant/ e n o u g h in
your hands : in my mind

one-week

Your lips pressed against hers
As *mine begged for air*
Tongue wrapped in a mouth not mine
As *I choked on my heart*
Your eyes placed with desire
Mine swollen with tears
Your hand on her thigh
My palm on empty stomach
Pushing her against the wall
As *I buckled into the floor*
You said you tried to replace me
Words cracked my shattered core

I would give my soul, to climb between your
sheets
hold you in the night / tonight
To burn my lips to yours so I could no longer
breathe
Gather my heart and wrap it in your palm
- instead of choking on my tears
I need you I need you I need us :
but I can't give you me (again)
You broke me into a shattered void
Took my heart - my lungs - my grief
We were etched into paper, ink penned into one
another ; part of one / we made ours
And for that we couldn't be - we - are - made -
separate but became (one)

I want to tell you I still love you
I want you to tell me you still love me
I want to tell you I need to love - me

To give you up \ for you / for us : for li
But I long/mourn/cherish : one day (I can no
longer) hold you
Despite it all ; despite my death
Take the clock - turn it back _i beg for this to all
go away : rubble marked my knees
Kiss my ear *one more time* (like you kissed her
lips)

Look me in the eyes (*empty*)
Face my corpse
You took my world - and I became a shell
Remember ; love ; why would you do this
(to me? - it - was - us) one week - one week
Drown - in the sight of my pain, my wreckage
I have become nothing - you had my all
- please - hold - me : someone
/ before I loose my grasp
(I am so unwell I can not breathe)
Betrayal hangs like blood in my mouth - sinking
my gut - as I surrender
every_one_else_you_placed_before_me : I lost
No longer words (*reaching out reaching out*)
\ fists too weak - mourn
How can I love? - when I can't hold my mind -
carry this destruction

We love(d) each other : that we knew : we just
can not be *in-love-with* each other when I am no
longer alive

(my womb is empty)

We dipped eggs with soldiers
the morning after
No salt ; cups of tea held in closed fist palms
Crossed legs - damp sleeves
Boat side wanders
palms clasped sticks - falling leaves
lips to nose : thumb to fingertip

// heavy breathless cries of grief
“Are you scared?” - - heart breaks : screams
shatters into small seeds // shards of glass
embedded ; (removed)
to plant ; to sow
a beloved =- two pills \\
water / gulp / stagnant glasses : swelling throats
the story slots into the bookshelf, young illusions
Eyes swell as tears turn to moans - hand on : back

From the floor, on my knees
I asked God :
How can I make this stop?
The cracking
of my lungs, my throat
How can I make this not be real?
I will repent my sins ; calve psalms into my skin
- give my soul to the devil
Can I choke on these ashes and bury my world?

And (in air) a reply :

you must mourn, you must grow
For your baby, sweet little girl
Write hymns with your longing - a gift you were
given, and love you have held
But you, are more deserving ; in time
Weave in petals, weave in gold

enveloped by dawn
held in the roots of the willow brushes
for ; coming home

carried - through bird song
- voices hanging in the wind
- falling apples next to rustling wind chimes
- lines of washed white cotton
and still ; and I

trial - of - the - lamb

Seen, open eyes - beholder
the fear, quickening of chest
amber pupils, round, unclosing

blood ; clot : tissue
held in palms
chipped aluminum \ sulfur, tar
a mind, burning in flames
loins, pulsating ;; nails twist
engulfed in this rage / was it loss?

i

can't
keep
a
grasp
on this

desolation
: or satiated \ despair, of the unknowing
empty cavity - metal, alone

05.32 - fireside, albe you were already : gone

my little girl ; flower crowned queen
lost in the meadows
with daisy chain curls and rust orange hair
peeling clementine skin
planting pips ; holding palms
_ grasp a soul
Eyes - you disappear through the grass
let you slip away
I wasn't ready to hold you
but you were (mine)

One day :

Look up at the window (*see your face*)

Walk down the street (*catch your eye*)

Open lips to speak (*crack into a smile*)

The bittersweet memories : baby ; we can hold

For we were all ; seeds, planted, lost

We were us

Now : apart : we : are : whole

I smile in the face of the black ghost now

She, who
carved bitterness in my bones

Stood, at the window, watching, watching, lying

Knife twisting in gut
Black teeth in bruised gums
You have no heart

Placed muddied at the floor of the witch hunt
Stood trial at the noose
knees scabbed in dirt, the ground
h a u n t e d

hair pulled - eyes gouged
Slashed wrists open for excavation (pure blood)
But, you are alone

I am truth

Water filled the vase
; Clear cut glass
Petals / unfolding
White irises peeking out of pea green buds
Sun through blinds
Cracks / of / light ;
Morn. day . breaks.

when my walls were shaking
and cracks cast words aside
pull me closer ; make me whole
with you by my side
\ I can't let you down :: go

how can I give :: for I am not whole
how can I offer : a body held in grief
how can I love :: when I am not mine

can / we / ever / really / be

when I tore down your bricks
ripped curtains to shreds
left shards on your doorstep
weeping in the rubble
/ I, the one to break :: you

we will open our eyes ; dawn will creep in
between the blinds, cracked moments
of light slips in hinges of time
as we rest, be open ; be still
and, we will , stand palm unfurling
we will, bathe in that sun ; awoken

Soft under cheek and tender to touch
Pink on the lips and sun kissed
smiles, tears on my wrists and poem
Lavender mind

sown, little seed
clementine tree
 embedded
 orange
 bulb
 scattered
 crescent
 of pips

mine ; ours -
safe in my \
for you were ;
 planted

we built our ruin from rust as time tumbled down
you pressed words into palm as I haunted your
mind
with mad eyes and intoxicated touch
embracing a-part between rooftop slates
seconds in arms between our shackled walls :
 love , was held -
 as hands slid within pockets
with guilt stained knuckles
clocks drew us away

l o n e l i n e s s

haunting haunting
to be held ; to be to be

a sinking ship, tired ores
creek \ stagnant in a lake
floating, hands fill with rocks
but not to drown

c a p s i z e

limbs - of - mine exist in boxes
given to strangers on street corners

those days ; I began holding my own hand
Clasping palm within palm
Laying tip to finger
Holding my own

Beneath the white sheet and
morning light ; for I am here

w a t e r
 T R I C K L E S
 from
 tap
cascading into transparent pools

dandelion yellow
 unfolding
 (petals) budding into
 flower

- we - unfurl - rested - on - kitchen - top -

 glass vase
 lucid
glade stems (clink) against translucent walls
 - sun settled on window pane
l i g h t
g l o w
r e s t e d

