

Incandescence

She tapped her gentle feet, seemingly
gliding across an icy floor.
Delighted, her eyes shone.
The kind of shining that inspires
a whole room to dust off their
shy bones and prance around.

She sang a tune of triumph,
rejoicing in melody as if to cleanse
her weighted sorrows.
 Lifted, her body soared.
Her song was a hopeful excursion for
those once broken—proof that under
murky shallows lies something else entirely.

 Something of tranquility.

 No more did she have a
 need for that dying lamp
 she walked with in fear.

 She beams her own jellyfish-like luminescence.

Practicing Absolution

Who knew rain could start at 4AM.
He sleeps starfish-like with me beside him.
I lie awake practicing:

You are light itself controlling what my reality appears to be.
When my tongue falters, you paint my body a battlefield
bloody and all. You stroke Your blue and black bruises on my
body and say, "I make you beautiful". And i whisper, "i love you".
My heart is at war with itself. How can i describe this except torturous?
Your backhand thrusts me into charcoal midnight and i know the
eclipse is near and i am losing sight as to why i love you.

The rain is weighted, now.
Still, my tears are never enough to wake him,
So I practice:

I deserve freedom without a noose.
I deserve a lover's touch without bruises left behind.

The sun is rising and my time
to speak up is passing.
His stretches jolt me awake and
the rain becomes nothing more
than morning dew on the window.
Just as his grabby hands pull me close,
my salted blank face whispers "I love you".

Who knew bold dreams fold so neatly in locked drawers come sunrise.

Bare Bones

No magic can mend what's left
—although my mother scrubs our home
twice a day nothing else to clean but
that we choose to leave broken.

Nothing is left but the sweet men who hang
around the corner store on 45th & rampart
telling stories of my father until sundown
when the truth of another lost day settles in.

Nothing left to clean but the blue suit bearing
polka dotted purple from the blood splatter
spots but my mother reserves the sting of
bleach for that which she can bear to mourn.

Nothing but our broken bodies are left
like those we have refused or failed to mend
—the shattered urn & fragmented plate &
recessed couch & yes in which he laid &
ate from & sprawled on—these are the things
we have failed to or refused to
mend for what magic can save us when
we have been reduced to Nothing.

A Game for Kings

The sweet smell of corrupted cigar smoke fills the old black-and-white checkered backroom. Men hang, stealthily sliding game pieces from box to box. When shifted from the decade the game remains the same, suspended in time. Down the dimly lit hallway the women sit, waiting for invitation. The men fuel their addiction with daily matches, obsessing over strategy to control the board as if it's not just a game. They leave knowing the waitlist is long, but that no seat will ever be open.

Daffodils

Your eyes remind me of
fields of daffodils in the winter.
Their six thin, yellow, wispy
petals blending into your
brown and green earthy eyes
as their trumpet petals play our
Beginnings when we lay in the
snow in the middle of Chicago
as the daffodils bloom
singing cathartic melodies
brightly shining their captured
sunshine-colored flowers
to the void of winter that attempted
to freeze them out because
no one told the daffodils
that winter was here.
The daffodils bloom
around us and for once,
I see the beauty of
a dark snowy winter.