**Water**

I still dream about your roots

 and how I could be

Someone,

 even something

You stretch towards,

 the Moon watching you crawl

Each night.

*Today*

Early morning

 I run myself dry and gasping

To stay flesh.

 My legs pound sidewalk.

The drumming beats me

 into haze—drifting off

To a lapping lull,

 on my back,

Suspended in sea;

   My skin gradually dissolves,

Water trickling inside. Your face

 above me like a soaring gull.

The sunlight tears me

 awake, I stop running, heaving

Wet air.

*Tonight*

My room with its blue walls

 and soup air feels like it’s been lowered

Down to the ocean floor.

 Time slumbers by,

Gently swirling through

 the room underwater.

Drowsy sunrays droop in,

 tinting the room plum,

Until Sun is extinguished.

 Then suddenly, like aroma from

Crushed juniper,

 the past rushes free,

Inside wafting woods

 soft tendrils curl up oak

Sprouting summer

 flowers, your laugh

Hot as Sun,

 us stumbling

Upon an eyeless deer,

 waiting for rot.

The Moon tugs

 on my blood.

Night drawing me out

 like a cicada pulled

From slumber

 up into the world.

*Midnight*

Down a glistening street,

 I walk and pray

To be free.

 The words running

Blood through my body.

 “Some people heal,

Some just don’t.”

 You often said,

And were right.

 The sky drips

With my heart.

 I count my steps—

To keep my mind

 off my mind

I count to one hundred,

 then start over again.

As I build a hundred,

 I send a ring of awareness

Down from the tip

 of my pointed skull,

Past pearly eyes (20s):

 Eyes I see in mirrors

And remember were your

 favorite:

A food or color?

 Ring then falls

Through chin, stretched neck,

 and crow shoulders (30s):

Shoulders you would scold

 me for hunching,

Wishing you could run

 gold thread straight

Up my spine.

 Ring falls through ribs

Unflared, navel (50s),

 60s glide past hips,

70s and 80s for thighs and calves,

 90s for ankles and sole.

Every section of the fall

   has unique color, texture,

Evocation, but all nourish

   the flesh the ring touches.

After about twenty hundreds,

   the ring gleams and sweats,

Then surges—

 torrential quartz-sparkling

Water monsoons

 me with every step.

Numbers melting body,

 cleansing, ravishing it,

Hundred after hundred.

 Horrified, I realize

My body wants

 to be ready,

All water,

 flush to your roots.

I walk home, lie in bed,

 legs up on the wall,

Feeling the blood slip

 down. Wanting

With blood,

 your roots inside.

As you chase him:

   he as distant
And clear

 as the Moon;

As I wait praying,

 walking,

Melting for you,

 night after night;

As the Moon watches

   a cup of water

On your kitchen counter

 growing stale.

**Our Holocene Ending**

*After Marilyn Bridges’s Spirit Surf, Big Sur, California*

Under the Sun’s

Surface swells

Tension:

Magnetic welling,

Holding eleven years

Of breath.

Billion heads thrown

Back. Pressed

Against the

Surface, yearning

For a tear.

The angels crack

Sun open.

Coiled tongues

Of silver plasma

Burst—sizzling

As they lick and lash

Through space towards

Our gnarled

Gnarled faces.

-

Tonight’s air is almost blue.

The moon is a slit of cartilage,

Underneath layered currents

Of oyster-iridescent ooze.

The bathroom mirror is cold and dark.

I pull up my shirt,

I don’t—

I can’t—

Piece it.

Through blooms,

The body leaks.

In the mirror,

The ballooned body.

I’m stuck with that,

*Ballooned.*

He calls me to the dining room,

Spreading butter on bread.

He sees my faces and says

“It’s alright,

Some time left for us.”

We eat the bread with reverence,

Carefully chewing on each bite.

We watch each other,

Ignoring the gouged sky,

We eat.

**His Locker Room**

Doe-eyed, dew-skinned,

our nude bodies wade through steam,

translucent and gleaming as mollusks.

He stands on a bench,

shriveled with fingers

outstretched. He’ll call you

*Tiger* if

you’re young.

He loves young

loves young

meat-eaters.

The showers shriek.

Something’s souring

inside his locker.

A face appears

in the sauna’s window

mouth retching

silent.

From his fingers’ nibs,

silky strands stretch.

They wave and hiss,

viscidly approach each of us,

close—sniffing the

curves of our bones,

seeking something

plush.

I pray

 he won't pick

my slug-skinned body,

not tonight.

**Fish Soup**

*Houghton Lake, MI*

What’s there to shoot at?

Orbs floating in the mirror

Lazy-eyed rolling, you aim, dead

Eyed, that eye that killed so much:

Piles of squirrel

Rabbit fish and men that met it.

What’s there?

You scream for John Jr,

You grab him and me, you

Pull my face to your shoulder like a rifle,

And shoot.

Gin starched gut,

For you I,

I would drink

Brine and brine

And brine the

Trout drowned in

Brine.

I scrape its mud vein,

Jade-colored when fresh;

Sacred ‘til it’s crud

Under my nails.

Bullet lead,

Mud vein crud,

Spinal gates

I crush

And crush…

Rolling on ground

Gun on linoleum,

Throwing linoleum

Tiles at each other.

Fish soup

Boiling boiling

Big bubbles.

Fish soup

On winter’s lake

Longing.

He pulls my face into his shoulder like a rifle,

And screams.

**Nest of Nature**

Burrowed in bed, watching PETA videos of men tearing chickens.

Did you hear about the flightless bird who evolved itself back?

Mulling over the man who ignored me…

Mary on her red-fringed bike, bringing rose water.

Did you hear about the bird who evolved itself back?

Curling into a cold egg.

Mary bringing rose water.

My friends and I pretend suffering is gold.

Curling into egg.

Molting under down feathers.

My friends and I pretend.

He ignores me calling - - - -.

Molting down.

Ignores me calling “Stop, Stop, Stop, Stop,”

Did you hear about the bird who evolved itself back?

Not man nor flood could kill it.