

earthshine &
Is

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EARTHSHINE & IS

BY

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for my mothers & fathers & teachers, for knowing.

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& for You

THANK YOU

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I II III

First Poem

not this
baby
but

the flint
light
of a cunt

—lungs all
full— smoke
& *shine*

dusking
august
dark &

sparkling
wide
into fall

Clipped

we just met
and on the sidewalk
under the threats
of dawn first
bubbling her anger
at the night coming
red onto her

i explain
tentacle porn
to the whole
after-bar group of us
(it's strange
and silent (barely
any traffic this far

north in brooklyn
this close
to day)) so you say
maybe next time
you'll come up
with us
to blaze

this is our first
goodnight
and just as hot
as all of them
the summer laid
full on us
like something lace

we have the last
cigarettes flicked
on the switch
little light bulbs
on the ends we are
holding fireflies
in our hands

i find myself
still thirsty and my
pack of smokes
all gone (it isn't
raining) the moon
juice and ashes
haven't satisfied me

yet and the sky is
(your eyes) acid

green and blue
a turquoise really
not the dark
and violent color
i'd expect

Night Stand

we go home together and eat
something
hot
tomato soup his red soul
and steam
body the dye
it's near sunrise and the sky
on fire
the whiskey
is over and there's still no point
in turning
to the wine
he's all shiver in the new october
and *what do*
you want
me to say? i'm drunk and i think
my bus
just left
now even the moon is gone
we really
fucked up
all we've got on are the streetlamps
and they
flicker
too *should i go?* *do you want me*
to stay?
or no
i bought you a gift it's an old book
with a gold
spine
no way this guy would appreciate it
i am
alone
i can't wait to wake up and go to brunch
how's the city
you're in?
txt me later if your phone's on
mine
is

Drupes

this is what i am for california
and the sunlight all over me

this is the experience of giving
birth but i am just a kindof slut

and not pregnant and never was
this is the beach and it is like

five a.m. and i am here because
i am in an awful pain the sun

is here too and also breaking
and that doesn't make me feel

less alone but at least that life
is perfect that even the most

beautiful unmarred navy sky
can change to something better

one side of the earth turns red
and then spreads through the ink

this is me and the grief of being
a dark girl in california unwise

to the fireberry in the human
stomach unaware of the gut i guess

this is intuition but at my best
i can sense only the dull rumble

of my lunch of peaches and yellow
nectarines the globed fruits

are called drupes stone organisms
plums and mangoes and such

pitted things wild off the west
coast and round with allergens

some foods leave an itch
in the throat some men an inch

get out of me i don't want you

Animal Needs

one two four ate
sexy crumble blue

berry cake moaning
song from the gut

we don't love each
other anymore do

we we don't we got
dessert but it was

too late the kitchen
is closed folks

stop your being
hungry and every

fucking need we got
in us fucking needs

beliefs and the urge
for babies the porch

swings and experiences
maybe the occasional

sweat and gasp in bed
who doesn't want it

whose own body won't
go in when it's cold

these old trembles
are called instincts

Dessert You

i'm a modern kind of muffin
i like all the all the berries
in me all the all i can be i
can be a pastry, a costume,
a flake with the melted flesh
inside. sugar added. sugar
add the heat to me and let
me *mmm* fall apart into the
heat the will of me broken
and my skin getting thin.
jam the heart a dark plum
of mess. marionberry, blood
cherry, the teeth you open
me with.

Pause

What is happening now,
like giving up. Like holding you,

love is a wheelbarrow.
Let it rain on us.

Creation Story

girl says why not
girl says she thinks
you are something
special these things
don't come along
every day you know
you know how it feels
to know something
without the thinking
without a why girl is
all these feelings she
likes it she likes you
every day she thinks
you are coming you
are coming home you
are on your way she
says she can feel
an answer just below
her throat why a lip
mouth tongue why
a place to take you
in why can't you use
any old entrance old
boy early man she
holds the wilting
tortoise in her hands
she thinks the origin
of the world is the egg
of a small bird singing
thing ready to crack
and fly girl says you
have to be careful every
girl has feelings and every
boy has wings the tortoise
has a shell a way to see
the dark at any moment
a place to hide to meditate
girl goes to the beach
instead goes to see
the edge of something
ready for sky ready to feel
the tides on her, to wait.

Miss You (Communication)

don't say anything
what's to say anyway

i just want you to be
here just stay

still the summer is ending
there are white dawn birds

laughing at us
i think they are gulls

planning their trip
to the beach

they call to each other
from the tips of trees

you don't even
have my phone number

how will you call for me?
together we can go

somewhere too
when it was still august

you let yourself reach
for my skin let yourself

go your hand
touching toward me

remember it? you must
how are we going

to get in touch?
i forgot to be listening

to the nothing between us
it was too loud for me

i forgot to pay attention
when you told me

your name you were melting
it was hot and almost daytime

and yellow and it felt
like your insides

were being microwaved
let's do that again

while the morning
happens over brooklyn

when you open your
mouth you are melting

you are hot
and now the sun is out

can you imagine
a pigeon texting

her friends through
a bushwick flight

of shame? the pavement
cracks to let us see

inside there is nothing
there there is only

the opening only
a kind of trying

why can't we be
that vulnerable?

this is ridiculous
the quiet is all over

the place and my hands
are very empty

Empty Stomach

If by "weird," you mean "feelings,"
then, yeah, things between us
definitely got weird. I know
I'm being a bitch about it, like

I don't understand, or something,
but I do. I feel you. This is scary,
strange. You made me a blueberry
vodka drink and I drank it and I

got drunk. You have blues for eyes.
I'll never forget them. There are
some senses I will never forget.
Blueberry is my favorite flavor,

but how did you know that? Stop
paying so much attention. I stop
paying so much for a drink
and you make me one for free. Stop

looking at me. When I look at you
you're all covered in light. It's dark.
I can't see your face if I keep seeing
so deeply. You've got a soul and a bag

of cliches. Because you cannot
have some body you cannot lose
them. But you came.
You are not mine, but I want you
 to stay.

I Only Brought 12 Dollars Because Any More Would Be Asking for Trouble

you can buy me
only one
drink after that
i am leaving
to go home and
think about
you you make
me want to
stay out tonight
were you
aware there is
a meteor
shower at 2 am
don't ask
me to watch it
with you
i am going
to sleep
i would rather
dream the

falling

stars

than

see them

see?

they

fail

they

aren't

perfect

(

this

is

)

we all

fall

to

the earth

(
 don't
 ruin it
)

Nail Polish

at one point
you'll see me
in red you are
a pomegranate
you have many
parts only some
of which i have
the patience or
taste for you are
a bunch of grapes
you are a litter
of grown cats
fat on themselves
and i am as sorry
as i can stand to
be while still being
myself you really
fucking annoy me
with your eyes
because they are
round and color
and you annoy me
with your voice
and all its sound
and that is really
obnoxious how
you just stand
there with your
body and your
everything and how
dare you smile at me
look away please
i don't have the time
to give my feet
to another fire or
to stamp out
my heart or stand
on the soot
of either of them
while you are
walking some
where away
the kittens lick
themselves
clean when we
touch them they
think we are filthy
beings and we are
i would like to eat
an entire box of dark

berries with you
and let them stain
our fingertips blue

Because

You ask me why
and I say it is not
my choice. It is not
a knowing or sense
or a feeling. It is
only that I must
and I do. My I,
my body, thought,
all of it, has a way
it goes and it goes
toward you. And
I cannot ask it not
to.

To Migrate

The clock
has its frown and wink on. I think,
finally, there has been enough of this.
The breeze flips the leaves naked.
I can see their backsides, waxy, ready
for rain. A wolf can hear an autumn leaf
falling, even if he doesn't try to.
Instincts make our worst mistakes
for us. I'm compelled to each touch
by a mechanism of your skin underneath
its own howl of sweat. I turn and circle
counter-wise and bell out, ringing for you.
It is springtime again. I know it because
I heard the birds sing and cry today,
over the rackets of traffic and T.V.
and it was blues songs they were
singing, elegies for snow. Don't you
see, nothing can fall until there's
a ground for it--no rain. There's
always an origin for gravity. There's
a pull toward you that my body
knew before I could even conceive
a thought. My heart has an urge
for logic. But I move regardless
of understanding or empiric
need. For this, there is a program
in my flesh with the instructions
in it. You, baby, are a reflex.
The birds (What are they called?
The ones with that ugly morning
song?) are in pain. They've come
here without a need for thinking
about it. The will of their bodies
(The longing.) brought them
in the wind for something warmer
but they are here outside the glass
storm windows, singing lyrics
of despair. I know, it is still cold.
We're going south so we can see
the Sun direct over the equator.
We like a good noontime, the heat
high on us, and the way we'll sweat.

Dot

she says love is an inhaling mouth
a breath of you in and the spit of you
out lip lip she says the tongue is
a good ride toward the lung come
on you know the air is just an incident
between us you know how it longs
for something to hold or hold together
the lips are a bound pair made to part
from one another so that she might
say again to you *i like how far away*
you get so i have somewhere to go
the heart knows the impetus of gulls
to climb as big as they can into a sky
so they can fall from very high in
and out up then down down down
the heart has one broken wheel
and turns and bends in circles
returning to the left

@danajaye

i'm the little parakeet girl
her caged and useless
beat her flight of wings
i'm the fire breathing kitten
feather green and flame
baby panther dragon scaly
cat the way she purrs you
back again i'm the insect
her suffering legs and
hands her testament
her prayer to the kitchen
in it's 3 am existence
i'm the gather of the beam
through the fragmenting
blinds the stretch across
the tile and the feline paws
i'm the little spider star
web of lights i'm the moon
but i'm only her @night

Relationships

on the desk there is a lighter
us under the christmas lights
among the cockroaches and cats

it's nice to blend into the apartment
we are part of something no one
promised me i'd find a permanent

home or finally finish turning things
to fire but i thought my lungs would
get tired i finished my pack of smokes

last night i blame you we stayed up
for sunrise for no reason and got
nothing accomplished we are still

going to die one day it doesn't matter
how pretty this place is or how well
the rodents are fed i usually don't care

about that

Shut Up

wake up and I'm still in my dress
saturday the night before this is Queens

county we're in and I'm a lady
you in your underwear it's hot

under the blankets and sun
through the window all the lights

are on meanwhile the black
cat scratches from behind the door

in an effort for you to remember her
and for a second you do in the pause

silent we are happy I don't want to talk
to you yet your southern accent

and almost cry hands all over me shut up
I'm sweating in here the phone goes off

buzz on the desk and everywhere
outside the trees whimper and turn red

it must be cold in the october
the ground holds the old leaves

and you belong to someone else

The Knowing the Tide Has

I made you in orange
and glow. The sea
has its waves. The sea
knows. There is no
choice but to give in
to the facts. Surrender.
The tide returns. No
one goes on asking
whether we like that
or not. No one has to.
Some truth must reveal
itself and some is obvious.
The sea knows what to
do without conceiving
of it. Come again?
The shore doesn't ask
any questions -just let's
him in. Does the salt want
for reason? I want you.
Come to me, come back
to me. Again. Again.

Party Colored

I would like to wake up somewhere with fresh air tomorrow, and sunshine, and there would be orange soda because orange soda is a good thing to drink. No further questions why. It's hard to fall in love without thinking *you would've been such a good friend* but there's no use always being so mad at your body, or having a bone to pick with your own heart. Why keep beating? Why keep beating up on ourselves? I had this sweet little lullaby I was singing I couldn't get out of my head and now I can't seem to remember it. The lawn is always brighter on my neighbor's side. I want some of that sunlight and party drink. I want the summer time and hickory smell of barbecue. Ah, but fall comes and the red is so all over things and then it all falls down and we find ourselves picking up what we can of the wither and pasting it back onto the trees. Hint, the leaves want to wilt and turn brown. We are all meant to leave so that we might re-enter through the front door, green and grasslike on our way. But I don't want to. Why not just stay in? We are not like everything else in the universe is. Your heart is under water. This could be a pizza party by the above ground pool and the ladder slick with all the times we keep jumping in.

Funny Poem

Some things are intrinsically funny.
Pickle is funny. *Trousers* is funny.

A fish walking on his fins
with a clown hat on is funny.

We fucked and then you left
on the MTA. I want you to go away.

The migration of gulls is funny.
You are a funny need. Some things

are instinctual. This urge to have you
on my feather and skin, this softness

between us which makes me feel
something, feel funny. I think it's funny.

I think the way you squint to touch me
is funny. Use your hands. We watch

Shark Week, holding each other again.
It feels safer that way. Some things

are violent. Some things are funny.
Everything within your mouth is:

your ugly teeth, your tongue and all
its mess. What do you want

to bite into, and when? And where
are you? Honey. Are you there?

Knock, Knock.

Who cares?

Another Time

i thought of your arms
today i thought of your

eyes they are drawings
of planets was it love

that blinded my cat
the heart wants only

to close her aching
she goes on for the sake

of the body she lives in
this is you and me

on the couch near dawn
and the sun in open again

dilating and i think you
are waiting for a better

time (retrograde) we
are moving apart

all of our connections
are going away

the sky is cloudy
cataract and reminds me

of timing
a sort of fresh grey

i thought of your hands
no remorse or anything

they have weather in them
the day is what is outside

of the window i am a vessel
or vase or something

rain on me

Aubade

It seems
there will
be life after
you. A morning.

Night doesn't stop
the sun from his urge
to lift up
and end her.

The moon, however,
is coerced
out of flood.
Water chamber.

Paper skin.
The blister remembers
and scars.
When you left,

I swallowed
a planet
(in the shape
of a pear)

and kept it
in my chest
to grow and green.
Each sleep

it ripened
with the swell
of my breath.
Tropic of Cancer.

The rain happens
on the window
slow
in small

repeating deaths.
When Spring
came,
the Ether morning

opened motion
on me.
Dew.
I have known

the diadem
of stars
the Diviner keeps
at home.

I was the girl
who braided
grass blades,
making crowns

in the lawn. I knew
you when
you were still
a small boy. King

of copper wire
and cigarettes
and broken things.
But don't

we grow. I know
how the buck
turns from a faun.
Monarch of Weeds.

Laurels of wilt.
The crescent sheds
its antler
self

to become nothing
at all. We, as all
things, fall.
I know the sunrise

and I know
the facts.
The branches
of each lung

and capillary
of the heart bend
like wheatgrain
giving to a breeze.

The seasons
in us
that the cancer
relieves.

Sweet half
moon shows

only half
her heart, an onion

bulb underneath.
Your plant-flesh
leans its rays
to heat:

a bent neck
for your disease.
You do not go,
old Cobalt.

The Empress
keeps dressed
in her pomegranate
robes. The wild

engine
of your body
remains
on and on.

Death is just
for the sky
and cards to know.
No,

no. You stay
and I will go,
spread legged
on the table

this ruined city
of my tarot.
Unbuckled lips
begin slack

then scream out;
Blues moan
and sing it:
Enough

of this. We grew
and now
we sex.
Our love, love,

is not an apocalypse
or exorcism
dawn. Not the undone
tulip, cracked

what moves along.
What moves inside
of me. What
stops. The rest

of the moon
is gold
and its top
cut off.

I II III

Telling Fate

lately i've been involved in prophecy.
don't get me wrong, i don't believe
much in anything, but sometimes
i'll know something before it happens,

like how

if i put water on my cigarette
i can guess it'll go out.

The Last Meal

some earth
some blue
earth where
some kind
of fruit
God is
somewhere peeling
with his
thumbs mangoes
ripe ripe
and ripe
tropical as
a last
meal Spring
time went
in blue
hot and
April was
just blue
all through
to August
good and
full again
with the
long day
light is
this still
sun orange
is the
round mango

The Devil

He believed in the devil
another world We keep
gripping inside

The Soup Man

The soup
man poured
the soup from
the spoon back
in to
the soup sitting in
last booth silence
the waitress spoke more softly
as to not disturb the soup
the soup man drank alone
mumbling and who knows
put the napkin maybe watching
down the man
carefully choosing his words

Beginning To

it's like I knew you were
first coming
finding that home
sickness is
in the cavity it
kept already
between your dark
aches and would you
—wild sighing
lungs— believe
me (breathe)
I know it's time
I just want to come
to keep inside
a little piece the lights
(a memory) are still
flickering on
until forgetting and I am waiting
to wake or to fall in-
to sleep Love

I You Us

You imagine these
are universes
full of
saltwater!new
landscapes places
where the
joyed world
God sings
the blues exquisite
lets himself
wild in
you the
earth-curved shoulder
thunder neck
god leg
and almighty foot
rain the
slow breathing
the lip
final the
sigh river
a wailing
body over
and over your
singing green
your eye
only for
this one
slow moment: I
contain you.
do not go do not let go
do not leave from
this safe
place where I
can hold you.

Fingerprint

I gave you what the ten best years
of my life turned full of singing
wild, we left and sex
home early. Forgot to look back
and kept bicycling on. Down the street
become the gravel the lamp posts
the winds fingerprint the night
We Oo and wow fall and
laugh heavy Ow. You and I
won' t know how it
ends until the night grows cold
begins to wake itself leaning groggy
again. The morning never learned
regret. Just stretched How to forget

Wrapping Paper

Every Christmas she snuck
upstairs, the Scotch tape, bows,
wrapping paper all-of-it
crunched above
mattress and the hum of the party,
floorful of ribbons and this year
the television said something
special for once
blared about it,
the I am
all too drowsy always
glow of lights all alone
circling the Wreathed
banister like a gift

Little Town

He moved from the green
late one night out of the little town
while she slept into the winter cold
dreaming on their windowsills filmed in mildew
shared pillows & dust & other memories we
He didn't mean to forget. Remember
it wasn't as if He had no control over such things,
He had planned to return,
to be gone only until everything melted, only
so long as long as he could stand it, but
as though by the will of the weather, he couldn't
He didn't love her enough to leave her
it was simply the gravity of his body
a matter of fact kept him from going
He grew up with her
grew large asleep on the body-warm sheets,
She was sweating to give up until the
morning sun woke up again.

Newburgh

She always
was a sinner
a bad
whore to her deep
but once holy body,
she
merely left half
of herself in new
skin&clothes on Broadway
she looked out into what
was a city, what was a
beautiful city,
once a long time ago.

Magnolia

Yes you have
always known how
new, the trees
happily become
Magnolias open in
bloom an accident of
just shrinking
as only the dead
soon learn to give and
to die then sink

Locust or Three Love Poems for the Muse

when you come
I listen
everything like lyric
falls into your body
and becomes
you again the world filling
with your voice in
want and every star
must give every black hole
birth everything is dying
even
the sun and the
earth will be cold
fire flies
lighting up only
pieces of each Summer
this I have been
waiting
for a moment
I can own a dawn
because
night must end
since maybe
we are all God
this has
and is
not for us
forgive me
I am just a locust
singing and singing.

Watched Pot

I won't say
anything
anymore I am not seeing You
anymore
I want to say I want
to see You
I want to see You
where are You I sent You
Your texts this is a text
a poem about trees
I said goodnight about communication
You called me once You
said hey sugar You said call me
back busy girl I have
been waiting for I am
waiting for You I mean
I am waiting for something although
I do not know what You are
a watched pot You are not not
not like the
wild belligerence of
the last winter
quarter crescent his sly
wink to the sky while
smiling before he slips away
he becomes vapor
ether body
new moon boy look
how You boil You can turn
Your skin into the sky
how do
You let
go me
say do let me in
do let me know where
are You going and why
don't You let me You
let me go
go

The Last Time I Tell You About the Last Meal

i can eat a whole pineapple if i want to
on the eve before my death

who will stop me?

who would dare to ask the question:
do you deserve this?

i do not
and it does not matter

I II III

Intersection

it's just me now wandering
outside your apartment
waiting for the next yellow

cab and my phone on silent
under the din of a rotten
crescent fading against

the awful brightness
of manhattan skies lined
black and blurry shine

you are still very much
indoors your window
barely cracked to let

the smoke out my pack
of cigarettes still in your air
and your heart stretching

a little while while the frost
brightens to melt it is equinox
the irises are coming up

violet resisting their blues
but it is night and none
of that is visible only you

looking through the cloud
and me the rain weeping
under them we are both

so blind at least we've felt
it now (a spell's been cast)
even if it's still too cold

to want it the seasons can't
help but come back for fire
(exhale) more skin (and in)

comes out for springtime
we all know that that
we call it (intuition)
 into wishing

The Querent

I cannot say
I can tell you
what will happen
or what definitely
cannot

but you keep
pulling
the Queens so much
there's no chance

for him
to push

Frame

When I die
my house won't
remember me.
You might. When
my body becomes
a home for your
body I forget that
death is a thing
bodies need to do.
It isn't exactly
this gaping hole
I have in my life
without you, just
a means to enter into.
Here is the bell
to ring and here
is the door way,
open me and come
inside.

Knob

Naked. My belly
is some testament
to no-god. I found
my holy by accident.
Insomniac, I couldn't
sleep and lulled
myself into dream
only body. I found me.
It was dark down
there. And wet.
Like the doorway
to a basement.

Earth

Past the sky,
a ceiling. Holding
out or up, what?

Find a flat rock
lay, look up, asking
What then? What now?

Close your eyes as soft and slow as the stars turn in the sky.
Palm to slate to moon, there is a warmth to this. Radiate.
The night is a curve, a bellow from the throat, lifting up toward
whatever light. Hound. Howl. Arch into the blooming and imagine this:

a solitary

blink. One

flicker

of a single, still

planet.

Moon Song

moon, you come to me new
every night, every time the sky
turns its crackled old black

record and we dance together
in the room. she plays the kind
of jazz for us an ancient brooklyn

used to skip to. moon, you
keep changing and i continue
to settle in. you are as much

spilling everywhere as you
are a casket or a chrysalis.
cocoon moon, what are you

so softly holding? what have
you been waiting to let crack
and burst from your skin?

sometimes you are so different
from yourself i can barely tell
if it's you in there. sometimes

you forget to come at all (it isn't
fair) and i can see the whole
place where you aren't. not

empty but an imprint, a space
that fits into your grooves
perfect as a needle, the ways

i do.

Earthshine

What's fucked up is both the moon and the earth
reflect the sun

at the same time back onto each other and into
the black of space

and for some reason I just can't seem to
reconcile that.

And for some reason there needs to be a logic
to this. I miss you.

I need to know why this fact or
imagination

matters so inherently to me. What's the answer
to the universe anyway?

What's the question? All I know is, in a very good
way, I understand

how miserable I was before I found you and how
miserable

I feel, now that I have. What does that mean?
I think it is worse

than if I went on not knowing that the earth
does rise and set

somewhere, over some horizon, a glowing
thing closing

slowly against some ocean, or over some city,
or somewhere

lonely, where no one is watching.

Balance

Not just
the flow
but the ebb
as well. Not
only when
the moon
grows full
of itself,
bitches
about her
heavy heart
to the sky
who listens
intently,
but also as
it empties,
lets the night
enter her
pale skin
and turn her
out. You
know what
this story
is about.
The manner
in which
our touch
grows thin
and patience
is a pleasure,
is an imagined
thing. A story
the orchestra
around us
knows but
we do not.
Not the ghost
alone but
the whimper
it leaves
in the body.
The dream
of a memory
of something
we wished for.
We are not
close enough
to this type
of knowing
to reach out

and hold a
planet in our
palm but yes I
can understand
the moon's
wanting to
give herself
like that, and
I can't say
there is much
I wouldn't do
to keep and let
you go each
night a little
more, and less.

I Am Like the Moon Again

we first met drunk and i can't remember it.
i wish i could choose what i forget, but so much
of life, love, is blacked out: whiskey or not. i think
there are many july memories that stayed
in their moments in the summer night lifting
to the silver gibbous. these are the fragments
of me that the sky gets to keep. where is
the moon's other piece? where is the rest
of my body? or when will the earth finally
let me into it to lay down under the sheets?
or what kind of flesh is a seed, only to bury
itself to break open and out of its skin
and into a tree? i'd like to be a bigger
and greater thing. i wonder what it's like
to be a tulip, its petals curled opened
and over, and dropped to the ground.
the moon must've been drinking when
she let part of herself fall in. the ocean
can hold her like you are holding me now.

Orbit

Crazy to think
out there there
are other bodies
 revolving
around one another (like me&you)
There is only one
moon to me Earth

moon

Earthset

the violet in the blackening sky
refrains from night: bright pink
silhouette. i'd like to die.
whether the moon has urge to rise
or the moon goes on to sink
the violet in the blackening sky,
the day is still alive.
i'd like to be a shadow, i think,
a silhouette, i'd like to die.
after my body gives, my mind
lives on. dark soul and the sunset drinks
the violet in the blackening sky.
the hours change, i sit outside
watching the trees turn to ink
silhouettes. i'd like to die
before i leave like this. it's nighttime,
and curled up against the brink,
the violet in the blackening sky,
i'm in silhouette. i'd like to die.

Just In Case We Go Swimming

for Emily, who sings, my sister & friend

because i was pretty sure a tan and a freckle
were the same chameleon species. because they are.
i had a little sister but she grew up. we cut her foot
once because we were playing. we were having fun.

she had to sit on the edge of the pool all summer
with only her left leg let in. we were young and
had to learn about the consequence of glass. the water
can walk on your skin even when it's handicapped.

miniscus used you as a crutch. i was trying to help
but it's clear it was my fault. we made instruments
to make a song. we move along together, aging up.
remember how we dressed to go to camp? we kept

our bathing suits on in case we got wet. are we old
enough yet? your hair curled in the chlorine. it turned
green. haven't we been through enough to know
how to prepare for things? sometimes the rain comes

while the sun is still up. it isn't fair. i can't say why
we need to be tested but it seems i won't be staying
dry. it is august again emily, and i forget the words
to the music we wrote. i feel as though i broke

your whole season. close your ears, i don't know
the lyrics anymore. we change and hum. we get
darker in the sun. our skins are broken glows. we go
loud at night, now old, go to the bar for a drink

and we jews baptize. the night is scarred. in the taxi,
the radio cries. we had a song once, can you recall?
the traffic lights are yellow and fast and bright.
i feel small. i just wanted you to sing again. i tried.

Ars Poetica with Flowers

A flower is (the same as)
a flower made in a machine
which takes in raw flowers
to produce more flowers.

Say it were true.

Both the flowers
and the (replicas of)
flowers are spit out
in perfect condition
and pressed and framed
and titled on the
backs of their leaves
in black oils. Tattoos.
Someone, you, signs each
with an angled brush
in a stroke or two.

I'll make you a flower.

They are placed on
a long and bright
wall where someone
comes to look and point
and say *What pretty flowers*,
and they go home
and remember flowers
and it doesn't matter
where the real tulip
went (if this isn't it)
or was it red or has it
gone to wilt and turn
its petals to the dirt. (Again.)

Cataract

My cat's eye's gone gloss and tired, it shines
everything back. Mirror face. It's good to reflect.
Poor girl, the marionette of light she kept
bouncing in her skull has turned dull. She whines

at the end of the hallway for a door but won't
come through one, and don't we feel each of us
wanders behind a smoked up lens, deficient love
and clarity forsaken us. I watch the first snow

come onto winter and steam the glass, unfortunate.
The flakes discern themselves against the weather.
The bird's flight can be traced to an individual feather,
but we can't find it. The cancer comes from one cigarette.

I don't know how the ash goes melt on my palm.
What's in me? What if there's a fire in here and I can't
get out. We've nailed the screens shut. My cat
scratches the kitchen tile to find her bowl, but it's gone.

Born Again

April is firing at me from my window.

And below

Eula is stomping
her brand new feet.

You know you can open almost anything? Vowels,
and hostility and mouths and seasons and holy texts.

In Eula's first life, cocaine
beat

where Jesus passes now.

I know my verse is one exposed Venus against a very large Spring,
but it's the the slow open of everything, even my window,
that has Spring itself acting like a lyric, a soft soprano, a lonely foot.

And now, Eula says *they sing for you*. And I think she means
these breaching seasons, where the walls of South Street
keep her preaching only to me;

Even Spring, in all its bigness, is lonely and wants a lullaby.
And this end and change is a kind of boredom. A boredom so violent
it is a black flower opening only part-way.

Metaphor

November begins
and already the wind blew
all of the leaves off

and onto the street;
hadn't even turned away
just yet from green. Wait

for spring. Winter has
its own skyline: the branches
bare silhouetted bone

and powerlines. But
I can't think of the snow,
and I forget you

could come back (in your
budding the seasons proceed)
because still you don't.

The early iris
opens and all breath and stone
are hush to listen.

Go

It is sadder without you
Because every morning is
Waking up to a snow storm
And remembering the places
I was meant to go but can't
The windows all whited out
At first there is some delight
In this moment I can relax
Then I realize I'm stuck here
Can't go even where I want to
Go It's hard to fall asleep now

Juniper

Here the night spreads across
the breast of day and yawns
one aching grey breath onto the river,

the ceiling swings low over
while the Parlor City hugs me drunk
between muse and rot. A juniper.

What forgives of us?
What of us can enter or be entered-
these ambitious limbs

want to know where each thing begins,
to touch even slightly the fullness,
grasp what is too large or disappearing.

Binghamton, your ripe sky!
The river once again is being rained on.
I cup my hands over it, holding
the weather up.

Long Distance Call

I remember the space between Chicago and New York
expands as the distance from star to star does,
and sure, in that sense we are growing apart. But
over my bagel I watch through the window
and the sky is blue and the incense man is over
his oils and glass bottles on the curb outside
and the bus comes to a stop and everyone
gets off, there is world music playing in here
and a girl asks for a coffee with milk (she'll put
her own sugar in.) When I open your letter
you are in a far away city, and I read about it.

Open to You

i write from another city to say

i am inexplicably sad.
it happens like that, my life
sprawled out, gin and cigarettes,

aching wild and writhe along
the edges of my tongue.
i couldn't tell you what's wrong

if i tried it. i know i heard
a woman bellow down
the traincar a story of her son

and the hows he died,
and i saw a mouse once, drowned
in the kitchen sink. i think

there are some things we know
for certain. on the TV there
will be the news, for example,

and outside, the inescapable
seasons. and we are all missing
someone who is gone.

the world, its seams,
is a terrible place.

Bluesweet Sonata

dad hadda kandinsky print called pink sweet
hanging in the downstairs bathroom | i asked
him why the triangles were all over the place |

dad hadda cancer | a tumor painted on his lung
and brain | on one birthday he gave me a dictionary |
and another | a map | what are you looking for | i know

the way the cells spread | it's a desperate
thing | we are also that lost and searching to expand |
our bodies destroy the places we want for home |

i roam this city earth like a shape on a canvas
of warm reds | once he said he thought the dead
turned into lamplights and such | like stars | what god

or ghost did you find in the house | i am alone |
dad said dane | it isn't the where that matters |
just how you go there | and now you're gone

Thanksgiving

Did you know the sun and the moon is two different planets?
I used to think it was the same thing but turned round.
It ain't. Both can be in the sky at the same time. Ever notice that?

Am I will I am I am I a wet cat? Am I wet cat? I am standing
out in the rain waiting for the bus. I'm late already. I'm late.
You're always rushing off somewheres. Where is that?

I met a bird once. I met a bird and I caught her. I caught her
up in me. Roasted the bird. Ate the bird with her own gravy.
You turned all wet before the winter froze you up. You've got

a muddy kind of love. Remember the texts you sent me
early Autumn your eyes a soft squint, maybe kind against
the sunlight. There were buildings in the background I never

seen. Nor will I. Will I? We stopped texting each other
some time ago now. Why is that? I am a wet cat. I should
really stop that. I should stop getting so drunk in a universe

so easy to connect in. It can be both things. Send me a fucking
text. When you have a thought you've got to share it. That's
how it is nowadays. The internet exists and you're not being

generous. What is you, bird? Where is it those wings bring
you I can't go. I can't go to another planet and stay on this one
here at once. Can't be both. You can't leave me down

on earth while you got that whole sky to fly around. I'm still
waiting for the B48 and there are almost freezing raindrops
falling all over my body, which should be, surely, more

clothed.

The Reader

You said *you are*
giving me
all of the power
and I said *you can*
have it

meaning *if it is mine*
to give than you
have given
it to me

I don't believe
in the first place
in power

I am a submissive
being meaning if
you want it have it
take it *take me*

Boy, the universe is on fire
and I can't even imagine
the regular universe
limitless and whatever

Being alive is already
so painful
having a body and all that

You said *discipline*

Learn to let go

Dude, this is the art
of being
laid out a woman

I know how
to have a hole

It is you who finds
himself lost
on the eve of leaving

It is the sun who
goes to sleep

The horizon stays
taking in the night

You said *I am sorry*
I put my body
inside your body
if only for a second

I am sorry
it was only a second

The vagina knows
both stars and day

She cries
yes
but anyway

So doesn't expect much
when you come

Understands the moon
must wane
so he can grow

You could say
the emptiness
is a way to tempt
male ego

Inborn in us

The vast space
that sets up time
to play his wands
along her table

Fine you be
both the sun and moon
and all the planets
and skies

and I will be just this
line

Over which
your existence
is to rise
and fall for me

I said *shut up*
and you said *let me*
speak

It is hard

to say which
has the power

the light
or that which
is lit

It is not for me
to tell you
what to do
or see

The sadist holds
the power still
but only before
he inflicts it

I cannot do not
know
what that means

Last Poem

You give me butterflies

You keep them
in your cupped hands

Softly they are closed
so as not to bend or

break the paper wings