

Enmeshed

I

As long as we agree
I know the air is safe to breathe -

If I must rock the boat
I do it fast and from my knees
though either way we tread the sea
of who we both wish I could be

if I must rock the boat
I hold my breath in silent plea
that this time dying gracefully
is all you'll ask of me

and in the times between
I'll hide my freedom up my sleeve.

II

Your love is like a noose tied off above my throat
and I gasp around this fragile, useless hope,
finding balance as I force another smile.

How could it be abuse
when I'm the one who holds you to the fire?

III

With you I'll always walk the minefield neither of us loves,
keen to let you choose the words to carry on this farce;
and though I know you care about my hardships and my pain,
I also know you're not the kind of mother who abstains
from letting her emotions fill the room and breathe its air -
you're not the kind of mother who admits its trauma there,
reaching in to silence all the screaming in our hearts,
each dying to be more than our own mother's broken parts.

AFB

Boys like me have *ceased* -
we've swallowed up our dreams
and now we pass the time
digesting these sharp things
which stick like bitter chips of glass
in thick and pillowed chests.

Boys like me must quell
our worn and unwell souls -
must not carve truer selves
from starved dysphoric bones
because of course they'd call that "harm"
instead of "forging home."

Boys like me are lost
like fish among fair birds,
constantly absurd - seen
as *female* from our births -
and naturally we'll never own
these forms we wish regrown.

Boys like me resign
to building hidden shrines
to redefining what it means to be alive.

Solitude

I hear words fly out of mouths
like mine fly to the page and
though I know that all these sounds
come from a different place and
though I know ADHD
means I may never fully grasp
the way that other people speak
or set about this task of
pulling words apart from nerves
like drawing blood from stone
I still wish I could have learned
how to let myself be known.