

For Inanna

Ruby Brunton

Sometimes I feel I missed out on the *me*
I write 500 letters and get no responses

Sometimes I can't listen to music
there are some artists I can't play

When Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan sings
"Ramadan, Ramadan"
I can't sing the reply

When Tom Waits says
"I'm big in Japan"
I want to cry

It's not the sort of thing you mention
when attempting your feminine wiles

"All the rappers I know love women."
He said.
My stomach flipped
"I like arguing with white feminists."
He said.
My heart raced

We drank Evan Williams
or something cheaper
out of plastic cups

I was full of power
and prophecy
that night

I spoke of the stain
spread over my favorite records
& how
& why

I brought up the least sexy topic,
the wilting topic,
the lose-your-thrill-quick topic
Smother me anyway

Last night I sat,
leaning into the cold
my body warm
my fingers ice

I thought about all the tough bitches I know,
collars up against the wind
a gang of 50s greasers
knives hidden away
They got the gifts,
they got the *me*

Then I thought about the gentle girls I know,
fragile, heart-broken, suffering.
Their fists still punch the air
when we go out dancing
They got the gifts,
they got the *me*

I probably got some of the spillover
I smash the ceiling when I go out dancing
I stomp my feet
I high-five strangers with five-panel caps
I drink contraband beer
smuggled inside wide pockets

I'm just in my teething stage
but my fangs will grow
out soon