

Little Bones

I swam in Utah
Before anyone knew it was there.
The world was different.
You wouldn't recognize it, human.

I ate and roamed the floor
of our ancient ocean
never alone as I am now.
There were millions of us.
We were the first ones.
We came before you.
You come from us.

Big creatures lived in my time,
sizes you can't imagine
in your small world
where everything has a name and a place:
tracked and tagged.
We were free from you,
because you weren't here yet.

Now I'm stone and
you place me on your empty page
for inspiration.

You can't know how I lived or died.
You just know that I'm frozen:
550 million years.
You just see my shell.

And you think you're so smart.
Humans.
The way you study and analyze,
trying to understand that
which cannot be understood
because you are new.
I am old.

You tell yourselves that you understand;
and you can keep on believing,
for a little while longer.
Sure. You're the greatest creatures to
exist here on earth:
you are evolved.

I am evolved.
Through petrified stillness
I am still here in your
cold modern world.

The snaked siren struck me dead
in the eyes and I turned to stone.

Life and time and death
and millions of years
passed by in that single moment.

Lilith: The First Woman

I.

We rose from wild loam
air lifting life to our bones;
our eyes creaked open wide beholding paradise.
Stretching our limbs, we inhaled
two parts of an equal breath.

I beamed in the glory of our creation
and bound through the warm creek
rushing through our emerald valley,
over yellow and violet bells.
We flew beside golden thrush
and prowled with the jade serpent,
embracing the gentle lion;
I sunk my face into his noble robe.

As the sun fell toward the horizon
we found that ancient tree:
boughs sprung with blooms that streamed
in torrents of soft pink promise.
We danced: painted in silt, arms arched
upward to the untamed sky. Alive.
By starlight, we basked naked without shame and
I rode him by the fire of the bursting moon.

II.

On the longest day, he lay in the glistening grove,
wet from morning rain.
The sun shone welcome streaks
through the cloud-torn sky.

Rolling to embrace the warmth,
he overheard a fiendish whisper that
deemed his power greater than mine.

As night encroached he came instructing:
he would dominate me.

No.

I raged and climbed against his blows,
retreating into my mother night
over vale, rushing stream
and hidden meadow:
seeking the ocean mist that urged me to eternity,
to exist forever cast into the shadow of time
for refusing his identity as framework for my own.

III.

Time will hold him and that woman he created.
The line of she born of them will never shake that loss;
our loss trapped in chains of
witch
 shrew
sorceress
 demon
bitch
 whore
slut.

Sisters, you recall a wisdom
that draws from my existence.
They may have torn apart my love for you
and ripped away my charge of our world.
But I never truly left. You must only cry out
in all of our fury, with all of our heart:
I will live in your breath,
and sink in with your steps;
we will rise.

Cape Cod

Old bones rattle in the salt wind
crushing me with their weight.
The waves crash into my mind
peeling back memories with the tide.
The sand is cool and alive.

We sat here together, once
innocent shadows of ourselves.
I rested my head on your chest
as we studied the November sky,
wondering who we could become:
salty and desperate
to live and to love
on these ancient shores.

In the cloak of night
gleaming water
chases the swollen moon.
The summer frogs chirp
an everlasting
ringing in my ears.

A part of me is always here.

I leave it behind
eternally incomplete and
impeccably broken.

Exile

Once I was young
scaling jagged rock seeking prey
sinking into the snow with the warmth of my pack
running without fear.

Now I am alone
joy is rotting flesh: scavenged.
I skulk in the sadness of solitary nights in my barren den
Silence drops from the sky between distant cries of my old tribe

Soon I will be gone
and my lone howl into the empty world
will sink unnoticed into frozen ground.

Avalon: A Sestina

I thought death stole my strength.
My eyes rise to blinding light
reflecting on the crystal lake.
I'm immersed in warmth and cannot feel pain.
Blood and water meld darkness:
my blood, pouring out of my wounds.

Young Bevidere holds my wounds
I strain a whisper with wavering strength:
"cousin, guard our Britons from the darkness.
Only you can carry on my light."
He nods as tears betray his guarded pain
Our gaze is drawn toward movement in the lake

A silent boat coasts gently through the lake
Is this an apparition of my fatal wounds?
I'm taken, at last, by unrelenting pain
But raise my head with aided strength
To view five women cast in silver light
as magic draws them out of misty darkness.

My vision fades in and out of mortal darkness
But still I know I'm carried on the lake
and lifted into skiff, now doused in light
soft hands lend healing to my wounds
I feel a surge of strength
and no more pain.

Free from the crippling pain
and no longer blinded by the darkness
I see our passage needs no strength
we float without effort through this lake
She says "you'll never suffer from those wounds
for we are traveling to my isle of healing light."

We arrive as the moon casts gentle light
I rise without the weight of pain.
To stretch my limbs now free of wounds
I race to unknown shore despite the darkness
wading through the magic waters of her lake
I fall in tears of joy for my restored strength.

They say I'll rise again from this lake
in full strength and bring my Britons out of darkness.

But how could I leave the light of Avalon?
No mortal wound could produce that kind of pain.