

somewhere between a brick and a cello

For a while what I wanted was to be a curl of smoke,
wispering awake through my own country dark.

I thought I should be a house on stilts,
ready for anything:

how his body didn't look
much like him at all.

For now I need to picture death as a school bus—
no longer as the sodden howl of stars behind cloud.

Listen, it is thrumming at the corner—
We'll run up and down the aisles,

climb over the seats,
push our faces through the open windows.

Myth Cycle

I.

They tell us we bubbled up through the dirt
like mushrooms
bearing each other on our backs
the way snails shoulder their homes.

We stay out all night,
scribble the streets nameless, spit out
 ice like broken teeth,
shake salt from our eyes,
stamp our skins shiny & lick
the brackish burns.

Sometimes we pounce , lightning across desert,
 bury ourselves
 blade-up in the sand.

Pull the roads right out of me—
grab hold of my rivers and run—
Unravel my roots til I'm slick pink clay,
then bash out my brains
with a blue brick of sky—

II.

And we're fire again, as we've always been,
burning fenceposts and jumping rivers—
we coax ourselves quick through blood and bone.

We unfurl wild across aching fields,
let every bruise-green blade
lick us lovingly to light.

Once we spilled howling from the split bellies of storms,
held for a moment

everything in our great trembling glow—

III.

After the storm, we gather
the stumps of old candles, bones of every blackout,
drag the wax, scrape our names
and then the names we would have wanted
across the pavement.

Caked in mud, blued toes blistering
we wade through the stubble fields
longing still to be struck
 by lightning,
 slurped from the earth
in a scorching spurt—

Right before dawn,
 the moon
 looks so bright and toxic

I want to eat it.

drip dry

When we first moved in,
we swallowed emerald syrup
until light lifted from the walls, until
we heard the screaming songs of fish
frozen in the river of our throats.
How quickly the rooms drank
the slick from our skins,
and she said,
I would swallow any hook at all.

apologia

On our long drive home from the hospital,
I want to tell F, lamely, maybe I can't save you from the train,

but I will wait with you beside the tracks.
She seems to say, look, if we're going to talk in paltry metaphors,

you are the fucking train!
and I murmur, still.

Finding myself too monstrous and unwieldy to slip into tree trunks
I become the hollow.

The doctor tells me to try to get in touch with my *feelings*,
like some cold bath in the needling light of expired stars,

or swooping into the closed glass door within yourself,
again and again, in a smash of feathers.

I watch a YouTube video of an anthill being filled with concrete.
That night Joe holds my hair back and we wait for the vomiting to stop.

It's turned out love is nothing like I thought it would be—
that it is nothing new after all; not so much something to be found

as waiting impatiencelessly
to be exhumed.

H tells me, I had a dream last night that I had
hidden compartments in my bedroom and my kitchen.

When you turned the stove dial the wrong way
dishwashers folded out from the walls in both rooms.

I was so happy.

MTTG

We sync up our timepieces in a kind of unholy prayer.

Silence as an assignment:

Don't think about the tiny mites that live in your eyelashes—

Don't think about your breath.

Don't focus on the duration droning all around you
in a space more sizeless than sound.

Something within me knocks
and knocks.

I like to watch the dawn scrub the sky raw,
gnaw a red ring along the morning's edge.

Would you lie
with me?
Tell me how this ends—
I like to imagine
that it could.