

Remembrance

We may see one side of a cloud
as it blows out of our vision;
the gentle sway above
is the Sun's understanding,
our question.

I am not seeking comprehension.
My mind stayed inside.

Eyes feed
my body
wordless truths
with my back on the grass.

I only know for certain
which direction
the clouds came.
As they flow,
I turn
my head
to what's incoming.

I cannot follow one patch of sky
documenting its progression;
controlling my incomplete viewpoint
by knowing every crevice.
These clouds will eventually disappear
beyond the horizon and,
before that,
the wind will shift the patterns
I've become attached to knowing.

I am constricted by my perspective,
but I am released when it's savored.
I feel lucky to witness
this moment,
 and that one;
 this next
I stand,
after the first drops of rain.

The clouds to the west are heavy with remembrance.

Song in the Moon

Mom texts me a Spotify link:
"My current happy song"
with a smiley face.

Under a jumpy acoustic guitar,
I hear:
*"They trapped you and they used you
before you even know.
Well love is blind –
and you're far too kind –
don't ever let it show.
I wish that
I knew what I know now
when I was younger.
I wish that
I knew what I know now
when I was stronger."*

How can I find the words to describe
the lighthearted weight of her voice
as she sings this to herself?
But I doubt she is dancing.
Maybe a quiet tap keeping time on her thigh
or a whistle I hear the echo of from the hallway.

If I shared these lines
made me cry on impact,
she would deflect with a wave of her hand.
Not to discount my emotions,
but to brush off the need
to sit in
what she's already healed from.

She doesn't regret the past;
there's no use in that.
This is a happy song
with lyrics of remembrance.

But we know the past has fallen to the present
when we get reflexively forlorn on Sunday.
Grammy would lock herself
in the back room to bawl

grieving responsibility not asked for –
but given –
regardless, she didn't wallow.
She inhaled and pushed forward.
Upon opening the door,
she couldn't get her feet wet.

My mother after work
(on the days I was with her)
would take long showers;
first shedding an exoskeleton of panty hose,
then kicking off her pointy high heels
at the end of the hallway.
I'd wait in her room
to be told it's my turn.
I'd wonder why her steam lingered
different then condensation.
Upon opening the door,
she dried her feet quickly.

The matriarch-in-training's
first lesson
was swallowing
adversity and spitting
out a semblance of stability.
The trick was learning
how to wax and wane in private
to not crumble in public.
Only the immediate family
saw cracks created from pressure and,
even then,
evidence was immediately caulked
with elaborate murals painted over.

I cannot show the past;
this is a happy song
with lyrics of remembrance.

Opening the door,
with the ocean's tide coming in,
it's a learned duty
to find the nearest mountain
and just start climbing.
This must be progress:

How can I think of the tension in my bones
when I'm searching for tangible security?
How can I feel the implications of my private escapism
when passersby can see my relentless movement away from circumstance?

But when I brave the look back,
the water has kept pace.
I may be dry now,
but after all the distance
there is no inner tools
to reach for.

While my footing still holds
I *have* to let it show:
I'm calling to the Moon for support.
Not in trapping
her in responsibility
but in needing
to be reminded how to balance
the push and pull
that comes with an ever-fixed position.
She shows the duty between
ebbing reflections of the past
and flowing with the illumination of new phases.

Mom used to pride herself
with averting eyes
that growing up no "I love yous" were said,
but implied in action.
She shows strength
when she rushes to say it first.
Diving into the water
means we can learn how to swim.

It's a duty to know action shifts
when love is not blind –
it encompasses every crater.
Love sees the New Moon
and knows with time and intention
it will be Full again.

The past reverberates until released.
This is a happy song
with lyrics of remembrance.

Perpetuity

I wish that I said
and I wish that I did.

When the moment is perfect,
it's already passed.

I hope that I can.
It's easy to say:
framing change like a landscape
beyond the pane.

Is that the moon
or a street light?
Is that a bat
or brakes screeching to a stop sign?

I kicked rocks in the street
avoiding eye contact.

I wish that I did
and I wish I had said.

When possibilities were
reality, I watched
opportunities disappear
into the horizon.

Wishes became buried
under a nod and shrug:
pushing off decisions
to become reflections.

But I will shift my vision
to the door
rather than the window.
I will walk outside
rather than waiting for ideal weather.

Hopes are tangible
experiences I can hold in my hands.
Instead of wringing indecision into their backs,
I will fall onto the asphalt with my palms facing down.

I am turning wishes into dids:
tomorrows into yesterdays.
When does fulfillment begin?

My compass is pointing Northeast.

I will venture into the landscape until
embodied change
is embedded into
how I step.

And when I look up,
the uncertainty ahead of me
is another trek
in perpetuity.