

### Awakening a phoenix

To be a cripple is to be great without one's awareness,  
being excellent yet feeling like a failure;  
to be an eagle, yet act like a chicken.  
A mind molded early to doubt its own significance,  
its own brilliance,  
is a mind forever in anxious conflict  
about who is right:  
the loud proclamations around it  
or the shy whispers from a gagged subconscious.  
Diffidence, disgusting diffidence, everywhere,  
as the weight of what one thinks one is or can be is  
suffocated by the uncertainty about the validity of these thoughts,  
caused by the constant cudgeling experienced  
from nobler folks!

But make like Maya and rise!  
You are not Fantine; your dream must live  
for you are the dream!  
You are a veritable phoenix,  
rise from the ashes of your defacement,  
dust off the shadows of discouragement,  
spread those wings and fly high to the heavens.  
Wake your hope from its dormancy,  
walk with it day by day,  
to build its atrophied muscles.  
Enough with being like a scared Ostrich!  
Unleash your forceful power, so even the lion whimpers.  
You are colorful, you are beautiful;  
a peacock has nothing on you.  
Remember who you are!

## **STEALTH**

Twinkle, twinkle, little star.  
Am I brilliant, or are you?  
Would you twinkle  
to eyes that are enveloped  
in blackness,  
eyes that judge the soul  
and are adept in senses  
not understood by you.

Fall, fall little star.  
Am I irresistible, or are you  
a fiend of self?  
I gaze upon the sky  
as one who owns it,  
commands it.  
I see you,  
a demure being, mine to possess.  
I will you into insignificance,  
at will.  
I hide my fear  
of you.  
Me, your bully.  
If you knew your power,  
you stars,  
the closest of you  
could incinerate me.  
I cannot eat,  
I cannot breathe,  
Without you.  
Am I a pendulum, or are you?  
You scare me like a deity.  
I love you, but  
I fear your metamorphosis  
into a Hammerhead shark  
or a Komodo dragon.  
Be my twinkle, twinkle  
little  
star.

## New glasses

It is that time of the year again—the anniversary of your birth. Gone are the years when this day meant staying up all night, the days before, by your window, with your binoculars in hand, waiting to catch the tiniest sparkle of a wishing star, with your mouth ready to release all your wishes within the short life of a shooting star. *I wish I were...I wish to have...I wish to be...*

Gone are those days when it seemed that life could change within hours, that miracles happened just by desiring them, that life evolved solely to satisfy you—so that your tears, even a tear, is a calamity to be prevented. Instead, it is the day that others can yell out their creations about what should have happened by this day; a day to create a new version of the history of today.

To your mother, it is a day to document your selfishness in failing to bring to life one of those little beings brewing in your ovaries. It's a day to remind you of the injustice of denying her the profit of being a mother: seeing herself multiply recreated. To your father, it is a day of yearning: his little no longer exists. This little girl preferred a date with a stranger, a stocky, self-important, so-called man to playing chess with him. To your brothers and sisters, it is a day to renew their resentment in being unborn. Because of you, of the inconsiderate pain that you caused during your delivery, the pathway to prenatal heaven was permanently blocked. They watch you from their darkness, all the thousands of them, each one hoping to be plucked and sent on a journey. But theirs is a futile hope...your mom's impending menopause is already flushing them out of the waiting room in her dilapidated ovaries. You try, but you can't understand the mutual jealousy between you and your unborn siblings. To your best friends, it is a reminder to lose weight and stop your selfish, compulsive eating designed solely to prevent them from borrowing your clothes. To your so-called man, it is a day to prove himself superior to your father in all material display of love for you. It is a day to love you until you forget what love looks like, until he forgets what love is and goes elsewhere to find it.

Yes, it is that time of the year again—a day when you stand still, watching the clouds of people over you, around you, on top of you, crowding you. But you wait, watching the nosy grandfather clock, which is too fascinated by everybody else to pick up the pace and usher in a new day. You wait, patiently, for tomorrow, because you know that Dr. Guérir will help you see yesterday—this day—with all the candles, music, gifts, dancing, and laughter that must have been present.

### **THE TRAIL OF TRUTH**

His blood leaked through his shoe.  
He didn't see it, but he leaked  
a fat droplet every with every step,  
but from only the left leg.

He laughed at his calmness,  
at his ability to prove  
the significance of his opposable thumbs—  
he who could resist the urge to throw that friend  
out the window and into a forest of vultures,  
to be poked at inch by inch,  
as if dead, when alive;  
he who would not be bothered  
by such things as a cuckolding girl.  
He walked around expecting the heavens to open its arms  
and say well-done.

He ran about the confines of his mansion,  
displaying the smile  
his heart had been completely robbed of.  
He exuded reason,  
shackling the raging lunatic in his mind.  
His legs' restlessness then were only  
a grand expression of his impatience  
to receive the gifts from above.

Still he bled from his left shoe.  
Then a giant thud sounded, breaking the ground.  
His head no longer floated in the air—  
he sank into the ground with the weight of his heart.

### **AN INVADER DOESN'T SAY HELLO**

I am sitting in front of my television,  
with my legs crossed and with my eyes glued  
to a show I admit is stupid.

The phone is ringing, but I ignore it,  
for fear that it'll be someone  
I don't want to talk to.

I am thinking about work tomorrow—  
wishing I didn't have to go.  
I scratch my unwashed body,  
enjoying the dry, grating sound  
that my nails make as they resist  
moving up and down my scaly skin.  
Then a joke comes to me—that  
my nails are acting like reluctant children  
being dragged across the room,  
in order to take a bath.  
And I laugh at my own joke,  
not caring if anyone else would  
think it's funny.

Then without warning, an intruder  
breaks into my house—it  
chatters my window and lets itself in.  
It hits my television, smashing it against  
the wall, and it sweeps me off  
my couch and drowns my skin in wetness.  
It flickers my light until it kills it.  
It bounces back against my walls and  
throws a picture of me out  
my chattered window.  
My couch, my flowers, my things  
float away from me,  
no longer belonging to me alone.  
I fall gracelessly outside.