

## Concerning the rolling fog on Route 60 on the way to the Kroger at 6:19pm CST

My end would unfurl like this, wouldn't it  
The environs of a perfect Lugosi horror come to fruition  
The stop-start-stop of my city dinged Tucson  
infuriating the Wrangler behind me  
Speed around me, man, there's no luck to be had here

My consciousness is split between two spaces, see —  
My body finally settling into its temporary Central home  
While my head and heart won't budge from Eastern roots  
The two battle it out as I stand dumbly in the cereal aisle,  
Deciphering if 2 for 5 still applies if I buy just one box

I've been to grocery stores across the United States,  
Stopped in a few in my world travels, and yes,  
No matter what time it is, all sense of time is lost there  
The otherworldly just out of reach, in collective peripheral vision,  
While the rest of us feel an unknown anxiety settle in our bones

With my items straining against an ill advised single bag,  
I exit to a werewolf's relief, a waning crescent in plain sight  
A damp cold brushes its fingertips against what skin of mine is bare,  
As I watch that alluring, misty shroud blanket the highway,  
Anticipating a plunge into sightlessness, emptiness, timelessness

## Sakura

I shoot Sakura a text on a Friday  
for a meeting on Sunday.  
I want someone to fuck me  
without needing anything in return,  
is what I want to say  
I am trying to ease back into intimacy  
is what I say instead.  
It's a mostly truth anyway.  
She reads between the lines.

The constellation of freckles  
sprinkled on their nose  
is in a shade that matches their eyes,  
Dark, unyielding, a little wild—  
when he smiles, it's sincere.  
Every tattoo that he has  
used to be something else.  
When my mouth travels southward,  
I think about how years ago,  
I was afraid to chase after  
the things I really wanted.

I find my sample of Black Opium,  
tucked in a pocket within a pocket  
of the two backpacks I bring upstate.  
Two spritzes, one on each wrist,  
rub them together to activate with warmth,  
slide the scent onto my neck.  
I taste Triple X, savor its nostalgic tang  
on the sweet and sour patches of my tongue.  
I miss her, but I do not need her to miss me.

## **natural disasters**

the days when you wring me out like a towel over a farmhouse sink  
you inspect my freckled pages, my misplaced ink on cream canvas,  
always with your hands, always squeezing too tight  
perceive me all you like, drink me in like wine I no longer touch,  
but I draw the line at being interpreted, critiqued in pluperfect

I'm stiff as a board but it's always more comfortable this side of the bed  
my body's indentation a condition I can no longer bear in these end times  
there are cobwebs on my bedroom ceiling; I've spent all day crying  
but time is a flat circle, and nothing is solved, I just get over it,  
get over my rage like high tide, like St. Helens, like permafrost

I love you so much that I can't control it, that I don't understand that love,  
that I fear it will climb out of my clustered organs and eat you alive  
I understand vaguely that there will be a time in which I have lost you;  
yes, I will wake up in a world where you are dust scattered seaside  
that pain, wordless, leaks from my loud mouth onto my chin, my chest

so I apply your makeup away from the bathroom mirror, open your sodas,  
relish the tremor in your hand as you bring it to my cheek, a special grace  
because you are still here, still whole and present tense;  
all I'll ever know how to do is breathe unease into our shared spaces,  
but you gave me my life to examine, unresolved, in endless grooves

## **Point Pleasant**

We're not allowed to swim today,  
toxic algae in troubled waters  
so we let the waves rush over our feet instead,  
murky grey and indecisive  
You hold my hand so you won't fall,  
but I pretend I'm small again  
There is fragility in your stance.  
I study the fine lines on your face,  
until you catch me staring and smile. I smile back.

There will be time for conversation  
the shore is changing for the worse, after all  
There will be time for window shopping in little beach towns,  
clothes we can afford but choose not to  
There will be time for fresh French fries,  
for sticky sweet custard,  
waiting mouths to devour the lot  
For now there is a seagull dotted sky,  
devoid of devious clouds  
And the promise of an everlasting summer between our toes,  
interwoven memories, in waters we can't breach.

## thoughts when I first wake up

initially I fell in love with how you moved and what you ate for dinner and what size your jeans were when I scoped them out on your bedroom floor that time you showered without me because I noticed you are smaller than me yes you are smaller than the hips my mother gave me and smaller than all the boys I once-over(ed) on public transit

but oh well that's all finished now and all I do sometimes only sometimes is ache for the familiarity of your thumbs in the once pronounced sockets of my hips now cocooned in flesh because even though you said you would leave me alone you sent me a picture of a place that has since become a memory but oh how I long to travel there again to remake the memory without you and your know-it-all cousin and your nagging mother and your suede-soft skin can you blame me I mean can you really blame me

hey did you know that I see your uncle all the time when I'm at work and he asks me how I am and I ask him how you are and it's always the same comfortable script except last time it was different because he told me you ride a motorcycle now which is funny because A. that's one step up from a BMX which I thought you'd never achieve and B. because I suppose this is the closest you'll ever get to driving

and that got me wondering if you have taken anyone else to ride on it or if you'd ever ask me to do it and of course I'd say no but it would be nice of you to ask anyway yeah it would be nice of you to do a lot of things you'll never do

but even if I acknowledge everything that has changed about you and everything that I know longer know about you I will never acknowledge that I miss you or rather I miss who I was back then so could you please give them back because I'm not sure if I like who you made me instead