

272 *Slaves*

Humming a Beyonce song,
my feet glide across
the cacti shadowed
garden
by the big white building
with a telescope.

The observatory garden:
ostensibly a place of retreat,
but there are bodies in this dirt
is there peace underneath?

If I scuba dive into this earth,
burrowing into the neat garden that surrounds me,
Its shadows
Will engulf my body like lava.

Flowers belie
The veins of slavery
A campus rising from the toil of black bodies –
Looking through the telescope
I point it down
And hope to find something, anything
Hundreds of years later
To dissipate this
amnesia

Balance

They repeat over and over
It becomes a mantra that
You cannot let harsh critiques
Erode away the metal structure
Of your
Well-being.
And yet if words wedge themselves
Into the framework as you're building it up
They're so much harder
To uncover and remove;
To restore balance
To the edifice as a whole.

the jump

Falling through the air, that's where you feel free.

The flow of fresh nitrogen and carbon

And oxygen smoothing and preening

The tufts of hair that sprout from your body

And sometimes stand erect like monuments

To the sense of magic that music brings.

Sometimes I clear it all away.

I cover my body with shaving cream.

I deforest my skin, slash and burn style, just so

I can feel nothing at all.

After all, I'm just a skeleton. Take away my bones

And I'm no more than a few pounds of flesh

A mere collection of a trillion cells that

Feels lucky to be able to face death at all.

I don't want to die or live

I just want to evaporate into thin air

To disappear like melting ice.

53 (a 9/11 Tribute)

How am I supposed to feel okay
Watching *human projectiles* on the TV
When these aren't skydivers
Plunging from skyscrapers
Hitting a terminal velocity of 53.

Passing of an old friend

It's hard to know you left my side,
That I won't watch you leap into the pool
Or simulate snorkeling, nearly drowning
In the process. I'll miss watching you bide
The time, even as you faded from Cordura to tulle
Your *spirit* never waned, your face seldom frowning.

Your mere subsistence, the beating of your heart
Your deep brown eyes that somehow knew it all
Defied your years and brought us peace.
And though I knew you'd leave me from the start
That someday I'd lay down your pall
I know deep down, you'll never cease
(to save me from my grief).
And I think of you on mountain tops,
At glaciers and along deep coral reefs.
But my love for you, it never stops
Boomer, I know you'll never cease.