

## **Indestructible Light**

If I were not afraid  
I would be afraid  
and still dive  
into the shifting  
tide of grief rising  
in my throat  
because in it is  
an indestructible light  
shining on an  
empty page

## **Lullaby**

I am searching for a lullaby.

The kind my mother never  
sang to me even though she tried...

*you are my sunshine,*

*my only sunshine-you make me*

*happy when skies are gray...*

The day I left for college

mom squeezed me

leaned in close and whispered

*don't change.*

I am searching for a lullaby

the kind my mother never sang to me

because she couldn't see me.

She wanted a good little girl

so she dressed me

in skirts and curls

on Halloween

I dressed myself

as any kind of boy

I could be

once a year

I dressed as me

as I got older

It got worse.

periods

prom

mom

still curled my hair

but I combed it back

when she wasn't looking

tucked it away

in my brother's white

Georgetown Hoyas cap

I am searching for a lullaby

the kind my mother

doesn't know

the kind of lullaby

that could wake me up

not with the beeping of an alarm

but the rising of a sun

I am ready for my own son

to slowly rise and

light the inside of my skin

so that I may find the words

that hide there

For too long

I have wandered your alleyways

In search of my image

for too long

I have asked for your permission

to be me

but not today  
my legs are shaking  
but the dirt  
cradles my feet  
my words lift  
my voice so that I  
may sing this lullaby  
that needed to come  
from me

I am not wrong  
I am a beautiful boy  
who bleeds  
and even when the bloodshed  
stops the facial hair breaks through  
skin the sun will still back me up  
the dirt will still hold me up  
and I will keep singing myself  
awake

## **Passing**

Don't sit too close

he might notice

the smallness of your hands

the shape of your face

the strain in your voice

## Uncle Dave

When I go home  
to Mount Vernon  
Washington,  
he is the only  
man who really  
looks me in  
the eyes.

His are brown.

Deep as the sound  
of him playing

*Hallelujah*

on guitar.

## Prior to the Flight Stage

Throughout nature there are fascinating occurrences of many kinds.

- 5...hand shaking
- 4...fill the syringe with the thick liquid
- 3... replace 18 gage needle with 23 gage
- 2...flip the cap off
- 1... plunge the tip into my thigh and sigh...

*This is not natural.*

Throughout the larval stage a caterpillar has to shed its skin several times in order to accommodate further growth.

vocal chords stretch  
and yawn greet the dawn  
with new depth  
deep vibration  
in my chest

*How can you mess with god's design?*

Immediately upon shedding its old skin the larva fills with air. This allows the new skin to take on that size giving the caterpillar as much room as possible to grow into this new size.

I run finger  
along first freshly  
shaven upper lip  
all doubt vanishes

*What are you?*

The caterpillar hangs itself from a branch using silk that it excretes from the end of its body.

I stand in front  
of the mirror  
awestruck  
lines in arms  
definition of muscle  
where there wasn't  
before

*You freak.*

The caterpillar forms a hard case around itself and turns into a pupa or chrysalis.

stretching arms  
in awkward positions  
1 inch body  
into compression

*Are you a boy or a girl?*

Actually what occurs prior to the flight stage of development is by far more intriguing and captivating.



## **Your words**

your words drive semi trucks  
come at me with the  
full force of trains  
collide into gray walls  
graffiti gleaming  
explode spray paint cans  
into poetry

your words poke scars  
swim inside wounds  
dive into these ears  
dip into the soft spaces  
of my mind  
trace stretch marks  
of new thoughts you provoke  
leave me hanging  
dangling from bridges  
and the edges of wings  
fluttering  
I'm shuddering in the breeze  
while your words  
etch murals in the wind

your words can travel like the wind  
knock down telephone poles

and power lines  
you write out new lines  
for communication  
pump change out of the tip  
of your pen tip toeing  
tight ropes and fences  
you run the marathon  
of in between  
build a home there  
build windows out of  
skin and silence  
magnify the salt taste  
of difference  
then shrink that difference  
into dust

your words are serious  
smart  
they chart a new physics  
of resistance  
friction rubbing  
against the distance  
between us