

*Hands of the Devil*

It's been days since I've seen the sun.  
A desolate fugitive to the furies of winter's  
opaqueness. My heart fears she may never return,  
she's been lied to like that before. I shove manmade  
capsules down my throat at breakfast.  
The sun sold pieces of herself,  
thrown onto production lines;  
packaged, labeled, carried in the hands of the devil  
disguised as a wiseman.  
Sold to people like me who depend on the sun for a smile  
without required transaction.  
I don't think the clouds are fully to blame;  
it was my mistake to think this earnest  
Hemingway era of mine would come without trial and tears.  
The independent she wolf is just a facade,  
I am not who I try to be.  
On the inside is only a girl begging for inconsequential love.  
She braved the rose bushes significant time ago,  
we still wear the thorns and mud.  
It's a long journey to water,  
even longer to get deep enough to float.  
My body pulls in too much at once;  
if a brain could hate, mine would.  
Patience is a virtue I hold for everyone else;  
I shove more wisemen down my throat.

## *Delta Miles*

Finding comfort where comfort is typically denounced- I return to the senses that bring me most humility. Piano hums through cushioned speakers only I enjoy. I lift the shield to the double paned, face shaped, inside lens to the outside world. I prefer the window seat. I sit beside two strangers who I'm sure are questioning just as much of me as I am of them. Engines whirl; I can feel the vibrations singing into my feet. The captain calls- still three planes away from scurrying far into the abyss. The attendants walk by, "shove your baggage deeper underneath". I take it too personally.

I know how this goes. My Delta miles were seeded at the ripe age of five years old. Maybe that was also the time my fears introduced themselves? Rolling in, soul suckers, smile stealers, I found agony in companionship. *I am certain I was born this way.* That my heart was made one size bigger than most or its walls one layer less thick. The moment I settled my eyes on the outside world, I heard the same voice in my head that warned me upon arrival. "You're not supposed to be here, you need to go home." This time, more chorus-ly, she sang to me as if one voice could harmonize simultaneously with itself. "You're coming home!" This made even my life-old fears weep at the chance peace could finally be reached. I knew, and as she reminded, death is by no means a misunderstanding.

Death is as much of life as birth, as dismissal, regrowth. My heart felt resemblance to the choral magic of her voice. Peace, home, incomprehensive myth. Maybe this is where my dreams have always lived? I extracted clarification through a process of rampant thought. Where sadness runs to find home in my eyes, perhaps a job well done, if it makes it to the part of rolling down my flushed cheeks. *I am going home*, but to the home that is finally redefining that exact definition. *If it isn't fear that brings me death, and though one day he might, at least he drew out of me one hell of a story. And so, fear marries melodrama and together they create panic and cowardess. I am their home, too.*

*The Narcissist– Her*

If your formidable eyes could live more of a life than their stand still presence in you,  
Drear and gloom would follow  
Permanence

Fear and provocation move as slow, molasses on a cold granite table, bitter brown  
liquid, brewed  
Percolation

Steeped, steamed, changing channels, Godspeed  
Shift your seething eyes forward, furrowed brows, rigid lines, stone cold, time tells  
Paralysis

A sinners game you aim to win, Devil's advocacy, adaptation, promised land  
Cower lowly into the hands that made you, forget fear and grievance, denial doesn't serve you  
Garden your grave proudly, tombstone placed with no death date, egoistic matrimony  
Prejudice

Falsified omnipotence, counteractive revenge, impending judgment, translucent death  
Love fed on rusted spoons, smooth as a feline's tongue braised across skin  
Hope is lost where you are found, malice reigns the cowardess  
Powerless

*Boathouse #5*

I've spent months falling in love  
with myself here— this space, this floor,  
this rug by the fire has held me closely.  
The fire, it's nice and warm. Candles lit  
give less a sense of innocence than  
they do intimacy. Arms wide, squeezing  
tight, the agony slipped through the soles  
of my feet; I walk on broken promises  
and faulted love stories. Disintegrating  
leaves crunch as I conquer them with my  
weight— it remains one of my favorite things

I spend more time marveling at the colors  
in the wind, and the clouds, and the sun,  
and the moon; and the stars align themselves  
with me at night. How I love them. How they  
love me. Hope sounds much sweeter here,  
she knew my name before she called it.  
I told her *it's been years*. She said  
*I've been here all along*.

I held to my demise as it was a piece  
of me. Faceted my own mistakes,  
ones I was given and ones I still create.  
A rope tied to my neck that I had made;  
reality swells but I remain enamored of it.  
Seven inches of golden hair fell to the floor,  
closeted skin now rests bare. There is no piece  
of me I've decided is worth the shame.  
I realize the difference in want and need, the  
biggest separation between who I was  
and who I am to me. This space, this floor,  
this home is where I built love, not found it.

*I Much Prefer*

Unforgiving moonlight irradiating the pavement supporting  
my weight, withstanding both the troubles I carry and the deep  
ridges of yesterday in my hands. The high roads are where I travel.  
The sun hugged me before she dove below. Percolating perspiration.  
Translucent pearls decorating my skin. Hiding extra hopes in my  
pocket to dry my fears, just in case. I think about how God left man  
without knowing— no understanding of what exists past nightfall.

Attempted replication of stars line the streets as if the real ones  
aren't bright enough. I told myself to stop worrying about where  
the people go while the world sleeps. *Where I go is worth much  
more.* Every now and then I stop to wiggle my toes, to look up, to  
count the stars; only eight. Primal instinct leads my eyes around my  
surroundings. Blackened figures of trees and houses. I much prefer  
the sound of crickets to sirens. Something about lonesome in an empty  
world. Brushing away fear's taunts— I think of my favorite things:

The color yellow  
    The water  
        Daisies.