

another tin woman

the tin woman is
not deity nor queen no

fist no flower she does not
have limbs

nor does she rotate round her
ball frame

she is not pearl held in

the hand squeezed and released back on broken flint

made firm and her

skin does not peel off to reveal under

the silver
sap something liquid clean peach she is not

beauty shimmering terminal guise not steel framed not
lashes of copper

not buttoned

not brushed

nor tresses of wire lean that I or
you or

he or they unbraided and *baby* she does not say

just borrow my face or please

(she cannot speak) *I just need you to love*

me for she

this made thing written and crafted unbuilt
waits

for the sunset's long
fingers of light to burn away the scars from

the end of well-meaning slurs

for the unneed of having

to mask

and bake self into box

for the gadget and the rig it rig it always the brown

clay into this ware

mean

or

is at you but kind this is really

that is not mean or that

is

mean I want to say to the ambiguously phrased sigh and turn away the mouth melted

at

the corners the quick cup of each eye the screams

in my head always in my head at

you

wrong your words wrong your shoulders wrong your longing for

the placement of perfect

palm or even pink hair coiled caressing top of nose wrong and spanish like croutons salty logged

wrong in the jaw

but

waiting thick cause I don't look the part to say *yo soy beautiful* too black and too closed and

that is

I say even cruel but underneath almost

kind

a cement bolting the breath back to the eyelash exposed bent backwards like spine

suspends itself and screams dripping

skin you cannot say this in

this

crowd you cannot like metal or pierce your tongue with skullbones that have afros and be

country

and educated

you cannot say I don't understand or I am more always I am more than this that what you can

see because this

is

mean to be known inside we must push towards polite keep the room breathing be at ease

even when

your neck bones gyrate and your feet scrunch back into a small ball of weft as you know you all

of us

just be learning not to feel and learning not to need and I need it

really

need it you know I need it you need it baby the nod the *I see you my sister* the *I know your joy*

and pain and it ain't wr-

it

ain't wro-

cause I

know you know

it

too

gravity

on the tv the astrophysicist says that if we pack too much into one space? time? thing? is like a star? instant of a place we may create a black hole and I think of data like the scratchings on a table or the entries of the thin encyclopedia or the flapping CD the thumb drive even how we make our body need with emotional density and I see all that information? data? stuff? as if it were a pancake pressed and flattened to be petted on its head a gentled coddled kind of fiend limbs just itching to grope remember grieve so here I change the channel finally because stone tablet or CD or drive is only an emptiness that that sifting astrophysicist flirting just a bit I think with the chair of the physics department never talked about and I want the meat of it well the taste anyway the spice the singing how it feels the way of my daughter's hair coiled into my fingers with my mama's voice brass a snare in the background of each of my memories or this even the writing of it the flat page and raised typeset rushing always to condense its secrets outward and weren't you astrophysicist lady only supposed to be explaining gravity how it holds and makes us connect each thing to the other to the next for I only wanted to teach my daughter something simple we can watch something else baby not her grandma hardly able to rise from the bed too heavy and pressed with pain to grasp onto me comb my hair bend me backwards all around her and how much I wanted that layer of her hands pressing my scalp where I can just shrink down forget the explanations of why I always hold on so tightly to the hard stuff why I always fall so fast and full of what has happened or better what is happening swaps position greedy because that lady smiling at that man is right it is inevitable this little girl's life in my own full of my mother's own and the thick of it information and stuff only to be collected like fingerbones muscle stacked layered unseen

green

you want to call her
ask her how she cooked them
if she used her fingers laid the collard
on the board and sliced the neck
from the vein to the stem ripped
the thin green skin into torn puzzles
laid them lay them layer by layer in
the heaviness of pan to shrink
and swell and shift but you are already
chopping leaves your fingers merciless
dancing then slicing each surprised stem
from itself to look around and realize that it
does exist separate from the root
and though the call is to her talk
about your grandmother the mustards
in her garden the way some things
grow crooked or must be kept like her shoulders into your long
neck or the ripping out of both
vein and skin you still want that
steel that conversation because you have no cast iron
pans your floor even your water is treated
brita filtered down to the quickest
way to turn raw bush into succor to make souffle
like these here wilted boiled green with this faint whiff
hope? spice or oregano patience? allspice
yes joy and salt and rest simple in this kitchen
to just in some part of her body some passing down
or her skin her name rest enough for the turn
of the water the lay of the stopper
as a kiss over the violence of those old drains
holding Teflon yes your Teflon she is already laughing at
cause she knows you aren't that strong
but so forgiven you bought her
after all those new plates for when
she calls like you knew she would like you needed
to tell you don't throw the leavings away
at the very least child eat it all stem neck
leaf bark root

but just not yet

After Terrance Hayes, "Democracy is Dying"

so wait then there is only three
choices 3 choices to spell out the words
of governing or control or mastery
blood your knife with their flesh or
their push with my lie all in between the you the skin

the bind it like feet one mouth to one and another
goal goad kill fuck why not discourse like you do alone
pretending that oprah wants to know
your particular big smart answers to those small questions

generic empty swimming grinning pools in awkward
symposiums of silence or that bragging way

you don't any of thing ahem ahem and two
sided not one and two and marry even with
that chain or pole or look at just the music as your

need for praise coalesces into some creamy
dominion but yaass queen without the conquest
america's gentle sister come home to dance and yes
that's a choice too fuck it marry the madness and dance dance dance...

with me like you have tails too to balance your naked
bowls atop your head or naked mouths filled with hate and dirt

sticking out its belly to wait for greatness but
wait! for you print to touchdown and grin to marry

and taste the only way of really losing the unfat lady unthinkable
skinny undying and diseased too wise and sad for
this consensus of free but unfree land of pink and unpink
strings and we just hide our deplorables out on the stage cause i
don't think they can even understand me man the need

so caught up bold lines we draw through our skin it just ain't the same
semantics brother that dear word democracy alive and breathing
like oceans breathe outside all these

silly borders narcissistic wars and i hear you all all good and leak
killing it married to this asking why why do we keep
fucking the whole thing up