

Early March and Mid September

I think about the first book I read when I left you.
How my mother had insisted
I would like it.
And when the hours spent with you were done
And time came pouring
Spilling out
With nothing to fill it
I made that book a bottle
And mopped up every minute
Wrung the seconds through its mouth
And let the words swell
And let tears fall
On new-book scented parchment.
Suede couch, thick blanket
Warm to the bone in March
With library book plastic crinkling on the cover
And I read that book again now
to forget about another.

Lover's Lane

Eyes cautious
Hands apprehensive
Because there's nothing
As expensive
As trust

Chest heaving
Lungs pumping
Heart beating
It's freedom

Another's hand
In sacred places
Without fear
And self hate
Leading

Dictating actions
Halting feelings
And we just
Keep meeting
Like this

I never knew
You could kiss
The bad
Over shoulders
Arms
And off my
Fingertips

Tattoo Stigma

Many will readily suffer for fashion
Accept pain for something fleeting and vain.
If I am to hurt it will not be for tights and heels
For the click of stilettos in a hallway.
If I am to carry my wounds for the rest of my life,
I want something to show for it

For some, it's rebellion,
Stick it to the man, stick it to mom,
Because for once in your life you need her to be wrong.
But for most, it's about writing your own scar stories,
Turning every big bad into small glories.
A fathers best advice for the worst times,
A praying mantis with a circular saw for an arm.

And pop culture is endless promotion
Of temporary ways for us to all be the same
And for a society so afraid of change
We have an awful lot of trends to follow and styles to wear
And an awful lot of hate for anything
That dares suggest any sort of end is real.
Because permanent means forever
But forever is too short.

Work Poem

Another day, another dollar
Another mom who doesn't want a flower painted on her son
Another dad who says
"They have girl ones"
Another parent who scoffs at the cost,
Calls it highway robbery
Who doesn't realize we factor in
How we value our art
Because this paint's worth money
But you're saying we aren't.

Another mosquito bite
Day and night
Christmas twinkle lights
Not quite bright enough to see by.
Kids fidget,
Cramped digits,
Babysitters who can't get with it;
The program.
They owe them,
The parents,
Photos of what happens
And "Smile, smile, smile!"
Only holds novelty for a moment
Before the kid moves under the brush
And now they don't want to pay what they owe us.

And nerves come with being new to a task.
It's a full day of asking a lot of me
To push down the fear and anxiety.
And nothing feels better than finding the right brush,
A parent who says "No need to rush."
None of those pick-another-one utterances
No exasperation at stubbornness,
Quickly now, I'll make the boy a unicorn
Before I'm stopped by my government.

Regulate my paint to keep the kid safe
But stay back from the art that I draw on his face.
I hear it all day that it's too much to pay,
And your boy can't be no Rainbow Dash,

And I'll paint him into a stereotype,
As long as you've got the cash.