

Breathe

Dishes bake in tomato paste
At only a day old
With hands cracked and battered in yesterday's soap
As frequent groundskeepers to the sink
And arms pull the hands to steer
A minivan to children siblings
Whose hands only grab plates
To leave after they reach home
And the chest beats with lungs
Who spasm to keep arms and hands on repeat
Because Mother said,
"You're the only one who I can trust,"
To stifle my breath and not scream at
Screaming children in the backseat who
Share only half my blood and none of the
Black blood in my broadened nostrils
Or off-white complexion tense to feel like
Modern help to my own mom whose
Slobbering dogs' hair and boyfriends'
Smash of the gun into her chest give
Me no room to
Breathe.

Tune for the Eye

The Sun's a fickle love
Who only shines out of sight,
'Cause he's on the run
From any eye in this storm.

Plates I haven't washed
Slosh in a metal floodplain,
A wind of barking dogs
Whip mud from their tails,

And they howl too high
To hunt down my falsetto,
And they growl too low
To hide the bass in my chest.

The sun's a lonely love
Who doesn't glow in the night,
'Cause he's having fun
With the globe's prettier side.

Water floods the plates
And drowns my hands in bubbles,
And little brother
Basks in blue computer light,

A mountain of soap
Unknown to his typing hands,
Yet another dish
Unwashed, waiting on his desk.

The sun's a distant love
Who can't shine away my work,
'Cause he's snuck away
Above my kitchen window.

And yet you still shine
With thirty-eight miles of road;
You still form the eye
To calm this hurricane home;

Remind me to breathe
In the flowers the sun's sewn;
Remind me to see
That green blooms in a grey sky.

The sun's a drifting love

But you bring color to my sky,
'Cause you shed new light
In any kind of weather.

Words begin to grow
Into saplings of a tune,
Green as my young voice
They flower in rhymed vowels,

Pollinate my chest
As blossoming consonants,
A meadow of sounds
Who grow to free the coda.

Though a cold snap may return
In the sun's absence,
These verses will ripen up,
Feed us from inside.

The sun's a fickle love,
By my blooms grow anyway,
'Cause your love's a ray
For tunes who hid in my eyes.