

*Daydreaming in Lubbock*

Somewhere

*after Diane Seuss*

Let's meet somewhere inside perfection,  
On the lingering notes of a white pear tea,  
Or in the spicy boldness of an Argentinian malbec.

Let's meet in the smoke of your favorite cedar candle,  
Or wherever the pixies hide your socks.

Let's meet somewhere bursting with silence,  
Where the sun casts its shadow,  
Beneath the Frio's cypress groves.

Let's meet where the Cliffs of Moher once touched Canada,  
Or even inside the scenes of Guernica.

Let's meet somewhere near mortal grandeur,  
Where little girls and boys aren't simply pink and blue,  
And where the air isn't tarnished with grime.

Let's meet above the banks of the rich,  
And where parents never fight.

Let's meet somewhere inside perfection,  
Where virus doesn't intimate isolation,  
Or somewhere I never grew up.

### Sonnet on Loneliness

In the space between your solemn eyes  
and sobs, I scald my tongue on this sour  
goodbye, claiming contentment  
in kisses from half-hearted drunks  
and grasping at every once-wry  
expression — remembering our reason  
for semi-slammed doors and snide insults  
was your good-for-nothing pride.

Weeks;

and our little yellow moments weave  
into my world — (black cherry  
pastries sparking aglow repressed crests  
of early-morning, pillow-light memories).  
I squeeze tight my eyes, breathing away  
the skin-tearing persistence of loneliness.

God: The Third Person in the Relationship

You love me just enough: not more than God. *Supplication and structure* — sexier than the coconut caress of my kiss or the simmering fondness of my fingertips.

How much do you believe? You'll never use a rubber. *No sex before marriage*. A few drinks and my appeal feels like the beguiling plumpness of Helen's lips, beckoning forgiveness. Will you ever love me more than God? When you press

my hips against the wall and kiss my neck with gray breath, I close my eyes and wish. Confession of these crimes comes every Sunday. *I don't believe in contraception*. Before, during, and after. You want me waiting in your bed. *Gone to mass*.

Forms are comfort, rules are water. Pith of virtue, pith of truth. *Punishment*. Instead of tethered union. Which sins are you afraid of? My cheeks eternally pink at the way your finger curves, upturned — sweet strokes.

*Live for death*. I flick my gaze between your focused eyes: simply, nearly crooning at the bubbling shower of your voice. The pew is more valuable than this? I know you nearer than the graves of Sartre and Beauvoir. I know you like the curving arches of the letter *B* or the burning sweetness

of sour candy. Made without magic. Made with chromosomes and formed by the wizened cane of experience. Love me like the whitened knuckles of your hand. Love me with gray breath and blue. Love me like the chasmic heavens. Love me as I am.

## Apology to my Baby Bro

Remember racing Hot Wheels across  
our endless kitchen floor, or  
disobeying dad during  
scary shows on school nights?

Remember stuffed animals and Gatorade  
after tied soccer games; or leaving the tub  
running for hours —  
water dripping into the dining room downstairs?

I remember you  
hiding splintering tears,  
hiking the stuffed duffel higher,  
turning into the march of command.

I remember Christmas morning when  
a sailor's cap was your only gift.

I wish I knew, when I kicked and  
punched and screamed *I hate you*  
how now I'd cradle you,

like a girl with her dolls, even  
though your legs far outreach my own —

I'd take your cheeks in my palms,  
make you forget every pinch  
or prod I ever made,

look deep inside your almond  
shaped eyes (a tiny divot in your left eyelid),  
and say, again and  
again,  
*I love you.*

## If I Had Lived

If I had lived  
under the Sun King,  
I would have suckled  
the plumpest  
parts of Portuguese  
oranges, and curtsied low  
to show my gratitude  
for the tastes  
of the King.

If I had lived  
in Versailles,  
I would have basked  
in the glistering light  
of the Hall of Mirrors,  
and fancied myself  
a marble maiden,  
possessing eternal  
perfection and poise.

If I had lived  
among the Courtiers,  
I would have reveled  
in the ecstasy of  
hot chocolate, and winked  
at each and every  
handsome noble  
who lingered, longing  
for my touch.

If I had lived  
wildly, in the galloping  
fervor of  
The Grand Siècle,  
I would have died  
clad in leavers lace,  
with casks of royal  
wine tucked neatly  
at my sides.