

Peace place.

My breath when hands reach out to catch it after climbing flights of stairs

A text that says they love me, and they want to cancel plans

The soft balance of a book at its halfway mark, when she stands still while I reach for the not-drunk all-cold cup of coffee

Those dreams of knowing someday someone will make an entire pot and bring it to bed, and they might read to me, or not

Putting my head on the spot of sheet where my feet belong so that the city and her sex shops disappear into big sky

Church bells that sometimes sneak through Sunday morning

The bend of the hill past the steeple where its slope makes those cars moan

Fresh blooms on funeral ferns not yet unfurled

A dishwasher already unloaded and a dog with unbrushed teeth and a touch that leaves lavender only our next hug will meet

Watching leaves light up at sunset from the other side

And daddy long-leggers sneaking through the heaven-earth divide

A belly's gentle warmth, and the jiggle of an ass

And a smack and punch and giggle after we've all finished class

The sound of ovens clicking on right at five o'clock, and floors which say the door has opened before we have the thought

Feeling that the keys are there post-momentary panic, and washing the conditioner just as hot water's ended

Racing down the concrete steps to signs that say *1 minute*, and dew on grass on toes of those who bloomed where they were planted.

This is a peace place.
And it's fucking ours.

From the redwoods

there was this catch

where the chisel chase hits
that gentle meniscus
who holds before the exhale,
stuck.

As if I chose to push
the fresh fresh air through,
all through the tired,
the tears hanging on
lashes
would fall.

And that was bad?

My gaze stretched to trace
the sun who danced

flittered

snowed

through branches

groves

who have proved to be experts at survival and family circles

and down leathergloved roots who held truth and trunk tightly,

fire marks and founding fathers and Franklin Delano,

Huimen peoples, a human hush, hungry hearts in Native lands.

They quieted me,

but there was no stillness,

yes presence,

and he was there.

New

The laundromat loop could hurt the baby.
Still, limestone might not be rough enough.

She has fresh clothes now,
strapped to her mother's back,
but shedding requires friction.

The unveiling on the bus was
silver hair racing down
two sunspotted heads
that grandfathered stories
gleaned from freezetag-bruised knees

maybe made while chasing he
who moved the naked
mannequins from curb to car
to paint them another skin.

Maps

When the Mayans and Gregorians sat down to invent time,
they pulled out a piece of old sheepskin and laid mine side by side.
The crumpled cloaked cartographers all leaned in sipping wine,
and slowly spurred by itchy ink, they started penning lines.

The equator made herself known first, a deep dark siren slide,
who would tell us of the seasons and their sweet and strong divides.
The men all spat and sputtered about boundaries to align,
which stars would tell us up and down and past and day and night.

Reaching far across the table, a velvet robe must decide
that I punctuate my little tales with freckles and creased eyes.
My cuticles will peel and heal to swallow hollow cries,
and this mountain zit will reveal our secrets petrified.

But then a shift, crash, unwind, collide the moment he arrived,
and my fingers freely went and chose the valley of his spine
where they found pits of manmade myths now trashed or cauterized
and got to yell the tattoo truth of what's now his and mine.

For the lady in white

Something supined by divine
as wind caught edge of pant legs wide

She was the first

Hand held, head inclined
with hips who hinted, peaked
into long nights with the one
she could have loved and children
who never came and gone

Rouged lips rounding as response
to the must smell, old snow, ruddy water
as puddles fed roots
dug in doctined decay

There was nothing pure about her

The floor below her twisted, burned
while music bursted, overflowed
to fertilize the fear, the power
which spread joyfully
like weeds