

## Supermoon

The moon dipped low  
and pushed through the branches  
like a door with a fire  
behind it. I was transparent  
in my night robe. Lucent.  
There was a quick owl  
in the shadow place  
where grace and danger  
are the same as swift death.  
Beautiful to die certain ways.  
My deck liquid phosphorus  
under my feet. My protection  
behind me in my bed. The woods deepen  
where the moon cannot reach.  
Etchings of shadow and frozen  
light. Feet covered  
with a circus of chowder.  
I do not know my name.

## Two Winds

One in summer, erratic, hiding around corners  
ready to press my sleeve. I divide it with my body, standing

in the stream of it, flowing  
around me like currents of long hair. As if the wind and I could love each other

in the manner of paramours,  
sometimes present, sometimes absent, and in both a faded longing.

There was another wind, one that lifted me  
off my lawn, rain coming, the tatters of autumn curling into November.

It was during that time when I'd lost a love and  
it felt like the ache at the end of a breath. I couldn't know what that wind wanted,

playful, capable of dark plunders in the night.  
It owned part of me. Breathed me like a vapor, threw my shadow

into the raucous air behind me.  
I was content to be its oxygen, as when love demands surrender

the very moment you are headed  
off to lunch, nothing on your mind but the next trivial thing,

still somehow ready,  
without defense or deliberation, to wager your life.

Water

Sometimes words are like numbers

in a tumbling cage. Sometimes

like rain whispering in trees.

Sometimes stone. I don't know why

I left Galveston. Maybe I'm still in my past

when I felt the tingle and the undertow.

I saw a pony that was dapple gray

and it reminded me of branches in sunlight.

And the way after rain the streets

turn to mirrors. The sun bouncing.

I could be that sun. Or even

the droplets in the trees

that bend the light.

When I stretch out my leg

my knee is full of sea water.

And my eyes are capable liquids.

The nouns I write spell the past

at the pivot point where it wants to evaporate

and scatter among leaves.

Or sometimes a lightpath

on bay waters just after moonrise

above the Berkeley hills. Welcome, moon.

Welcome bay.

Welcome sunshine, twice reflected.

Absence and a Deep Mirror

*after Leila Chatti*

Your trench coat  
hangs on hooks in the hall. Only your absence  
like smoke drifting through the rooms.

The emptiness reliable  
as the ache of a broken bone.

The mirror an open eye I stand before, naked, watched  
as you watched me from across the bed.

I cannot say how I learned to be so undressed,  
so hungry. Skin-memory rising  
like a chill.

Hours with your eyes angular, as if  
by ownership. Ordained. The small hairs of my chest imbedded  
in the wake of your heartbeat  
the way the wind parts the bashful leaves of mimosa.

You made me a thing imagined  
by your surgical gaze. You said you could stay as long  
as we were worthy,  
moments that rose like corridors swelling.

We are the echo of a love song.

Light from the street  
slips its fingers across my shadow.  
The mirror is ravenous.

I am the hollow reflection of your departure.

Since You Will Leave Me Or I Will Leave You. . .

Because the light is fading and because  
it has been told to do so  
                  the street lamp  
embers up, embers down, ignition  
hesitating at the spark.

                  Barely on, barely off,  
it pulses in the dying light.

A little wind,  
a tuft of hair, and the shape of a woman  
                  moves through the forms she takes  
leaving in dusklight—

                  I watch

with the same eyes I have watched you  
bathing, silken  
                  with sweat and with loving,  
                  my body folded  
into yours, as now  
even across this distance  
                  against the wind and light.

                  But love  
is eventually about leaving,  
                  one way or another.  
                  Isn't it so?

That is why every small leaving is tender.

                  In the road of departure,  
still moving like departure,  
                  halfway into the world  
beyond the low window  
where the two worlds meet—

                  you turn

and look back at me  
                  because the sun

which always fades without hesitation  
is snagged on this moment,  
orange with longing,  
clinging to the edge of the earth.