

A Rushed Poem

This poem have I writ, 'tween classes filled,
For I had not a second to delay,
Already, I've too long from pencil spilled,
And eaten up my momentary stay.
A lunch could I have messied 'fore I go,
Or studied up a storm inter-exam,
Instead, I dwelt on all the time I blow
On lyric, or on curséd instagram.
Oh, blessed time that long since present passed,
Could I but then again have found thy frame,
I would then still have wasted on this path,
And dreamed as much in ditches by the way.
So, even had I stacked my schedule fine,
Would I have wrote, between the absent time.

I'd Rather Not Say

If you ask me what went wrong
While shattered plates are on the floor
With the remnants of a meal
I'd prepared to serve for four,

Mugs that, once, I had adored
Stuffed into a paper bin
Wrapped in countless sheets of gossip
So they will not harm again,

Marmalade that gels my hair
With an orange-reddish tinge
Toast that bid me once good day,
Now is crumbling and singed.

If you ask me what went wrong that day,
Well, I'd rather not say.

If you ask me what went wrong
While the boat is floating flipped
Oars absented from my presence
Hat and kayak long since tipped,

Jackets hanging up in trees
Somehow far beyond our view,
And the sound of something burbling
In the base of the canoe.

Something brushed against my foot

In the darkness of the deep,
And I'm pretty sure my swimsuit's
Waterlogging fifty feet.

If you ask me what went wrong that day,
Well, I'd rather not say.

If you ask me what went wrong
While the house is slumping down
With the wreckage of my bookshelves
Spilling stories on the ground.

Supports that once held frenzied dancing
Now are snapped like kindling twigs
And the friends I'd had a laugh with
Heave a shuffle round the digs.

The floor is oddly absent
Though we hope she'll be back soon,
While the dirt and disarrangement
Loaf around the living room.

If you ask me what went wrong that day,
Well, I'd rather not say.

If you ask me what went wrong
While tears are spilling down my cheeks
And I've softened every paper
Tearing holes in watered sheets,

And my arms are huddled up

Curling nervous round my knees,
And the sound that I've been squeaking's
Half-a-cough and half-a-sneeze,

I've been whispering something prayerful,
Could be mistaken for a plea,
I'm up to ears in wordless poems
And songs that haven't got a key.

If you ask me what went wrong that day,
Well, I'd rather not say.

If you ask me what went wrong
While I'm grinning like a cat,
Or I'm whistling up a tune,
Shoeless walking and broke flat.

Wandering aimless some direction
Deaf to sirens, honks and calls,
Or I'm lying on a backpack
Outside banks and bathroom stalls.

If I float from dirty looks to dryness
And I need a break between,
Till I'm barely made of muscle
And I'm gaunt and pale and lean.

If you ask me what went wrong that day,
I'd rather not say.

If you ask me what went wrong,

While I'm crinkled, cold and creased
And my age and my IQ, surely paired,
Have both decreased.

When I'm gray and gold and gassy
And I'm going up in fumes
Cause I've decorated candles
In the corners of my rooms.

At the edge of callous kindness
And of deepest winter peace,
And my conscience is unfolded
In the wake of my disease.

If you ask me what went wrong that day,
I'd rather not say.
If you ask me what went wrong that day,
Well, I'd rather not say.

The Eyelid

The eyelid keeps away unwanted truths
And the child who uses one wisely may
Hide the worst storm,
While catching glimpse of
Violent humanity
In all her glory.
Witness or do not
Sleep, but close your eyelids
Halfway into dream
Enough to give the nightmare
Hold enough to creep,
But not to stay.
Or clench them tight
Contain your solar system;
Bind the beating heart
To the sun.
Find comfort in the Us and Them
Burst from brilliant silence into
Yourself, your art, your mind,
While they struggle.
The news is on the screen
And I allow it to pinhole camera
On my retina.
It is just as unpleasant
As I remember it being when last I
Shut my eyes.

The Father

The sermon plays on the tv outside the sanctuary

A word that means “Place of Safety”, but inside

Her family,

And he couldn't face them

Or God.

He has done nothing wrong

Unless you consider fatherhood a monstrosity

But his eyes are drained of the laugh

The warmth of games played

And time clocked in as friends.

There is no question that the friendship is over,

His wife is in the church library and she

Clings with desperation to failing secrecy

Locking her smile in place

With the attic key.

Ignore the noise.

He is waiting for infinity to claim him

Or for it all to blow over

For the nightmarish wake-up

And for it all to have been a fever-slipped

Dream, pouring out of the worst abscess

Of the soul.

But the relief cannot come

Not with the shadow of evil

And its refusal to recognize its shape

In the midst of the holy halls

Of the mind.

He could not have had this

Any other way.