

## **Gossiping Rain**

The fingertips of the rain  
impatiently drumming  
on the tin roof drew  
back the covers and coaxed me  
from the ether.

I had been dreaming of you,  
and just before my mind gave  
way to the material, I beheld  
the look in your eyes that  
told me what I had  
always wanted to know.

I awoke alone.

Immediately my joy was wounded,  
but I dove skillfully to ensure  
that it was only grazed.  
Recovering, I wrapped myself  
in the grey and invited the rain  
to tell me its secrets –  
It gossiped all morning,  
but all I could do was listen  
and not allow my coffee to grow cold.

## Shades of Grey

The light in your eyes is gone –  
the grey of an early February afternoon  
has taken up residence in its absence.  
The ferociousness in your guts  
that always seemed to be regurgitated,  
and reverberated across your tongue  
has been drained –  
Replaced by a grey  
of Picasso's *Guernica*.  
And while that painting  
can evoke so many words, and those greys  
can be described in so many ways  
the only word you can muster now is:

Empty.

It drips from your tongue  
like water from a faulty tap –  
Making the back and sides of  
your tongue salivate,  
causing you to wonder  
if you will vomit,  
or if you are hungry,  
or if you are being eaten  
from the inside out  
by a parasite that  
you feel a flicker of  
familiarity with –

You always were such a gracious host.

Never wanting to say  
that the party was over  
until your guests  
burned the house down.  
Well the house is on fire now,  
and your cheeks are  
as ashen as the smoke  
that's tumbling from  
the shutters and doors.  
And all you do is stand mesmerized,  
at the street corner.  
You don't cry out or  
call for help.

You are simply awestruck,  
and thankful,  
that the reflection of a flame  
alights your eye and there is  
warmth befalling your skin.

## **Trees of my Childhood**

Returning to home of my youth  
I walk the yard –  
Lingering among the trees  
I climbed and knew as a child.

They gave me pause  
and entreated me to  
embrace them.  
Shoulders swooning  
and heart willing  
I nearly did –

I longed to engage them  
in conversation,  
like the days when they were  
the greatest actors  
in my most masterful plays;  
We performed daily while I lay  
in their arms and played at their feet.

But I stopped short  
under the gaze  
that I assumed was  
judging from the window.

I was ashamed then,  
and again, more fervently,  
later.

## **Listen to my Whisper**

I hate the way you  
dog ear the pages of books.  
Yet I find myself  
caressing each one between  
thumb and forefinger  
just to touch what  
you have touched.

I do it in the same meter  
in which I attempt to rub your ears –  
You always batting me away,  
unless you are feeling  
especially tolerant or distracted.  
The books cannot bat you away,  
so I stand up for them.

Now there is no batting.  
Quietly I rub the ears that  
you have left me –  
Even though they are not  
the ones I want.  
And the pages  
do not want ears  
because they are here  
to speak and not to listen.

But I think maybe they  
like their ears when  
I am rubbing them.  
Because with their new ears  
they can hear that the pacing  
of my fingers is just another  
way that I whisper:  
I love you.

## Field of the Unforgotten

I searched myself with an observant eye,  
hands behind back and gate slow,  
making my way

to the field of the unforgotten:  
where memories are pushed  
and beg to be overgrown.

There I pulled a length of chain link fence,  
knitted with tall grass and rotting leaves,  
from between my left floating ribs;

Copper door knobs, licked pale green,  
crawling towards white,  
turned from my knees;

Wire, stripped  
from the spool  
of my sternum;

A tire housing stagnant water,  
dredged from the winding  
wetland of my small intestine;

Glass shards raked from my fat,  
foolishly winking,  
in the fixed gaze of the sun.

Each of these monuments  
I carted at a swift clip  
to the edge of my flat world,

loosing them from my palms,  
watching them incinerate  
in my atmosphere,

warming myself,  
by the fire of their  
transfiguration.