

I AM & a little on how

CARPET BETWEEN THE TOES

Carpet between the toes
like yesterdays of climbing up
on daddy's lap and
chocolate milk mustaches-
Only now my heels are cracked and
there are always marks around my eyes
from where I smile.

Never crossed my mind that
maybe my love for mustard yellow
was rooted in that flattened spot
right in front of the t.v.
Or my coffee addiction started
when creamy cups were
vessels to dip my
battered toast.

Now I wrap myself tight with a scarf,
may as well be a cut
from that old orange sofa.
Over breakfast I still get
grossed out by mouth noises
annoyed by slurping sips and
anxious from the knives
against the ceramic.

Maybe tomorrow I will think more about
what got me here-
Finger tips in the font
a genuflect, sign of the cross and
lungs filled with incense.
Or maybe it was more about the
late night stops at Wendy's-
stomach grumbling,
I hand over my fries anyway
to make sure you are full.

Meanwhile, I wrap myself tight
with a scarf-
May as well be that patchwork blanket
I carried with me everywhere.
Security and another layer
between me and the cold.

COUNTING YEARS

Counting years like dirty sleeves,
unnoticed accomplishments are
quarters in the swear jar-
never did know how to slow down.
I want to go back to swing sets at recess
head back, eyes closed, legs pumping
only me and the clouds-
must have missed the bell again.
Reflecting without references:
baby books, year books, scrap books,
storing clues for the amnesia of adulthood-
I am tucked into 20 years worth of creased sheets
and fluffed pillows,
tucked into the sweetness of sleep and dream,
singing to myself while imagining your
fingers tracing butterflies on my face.
Shedding the guilt that I will only
ever be exactly who I am.

I AM

She sunk in and brushed her hair into the grass.
Pressed her palms into the moist soil,
dug her heels into the earth.
Eyes closed she imagined herself
becoming one with the mother-
“I am, I am”-

Memories faded like the seasons-
of being human-
her father waving from his powder blue Buick-
she imagined he was still driving... driving...
her first boyfriend sliding his hand up her dress-
she imagined he would not have stopped if she hadn't...
her mangled arm hanging at her side after a tumble down the stairs-
she imagined herself falling...falling...

“I am, I am”
she felt the ladybugs and caterpillars-
crawling in and out of her rib cage,
she felt the rain soak into her-
nourishing veins,
she felt the great Sequoia-
digging his roots right through her heart

Past lives falling like stands of hair
in the summer-
her as a student-
honor roll and positive pressure
her as a daughter-
lonely and fighting
her as a human-
spinal curve and glowing skin

“I am, I am”
Love not battle,
Devoted not cynical,
Soul not body.

Days passing like ancestors,
in the earth where she lay.
She peeled herself up-
Eyes open she looked into the sun,
becoming one with the divine-
“I am, I am.”

THERE WE WERE: Melting Edges

We used to be the calloused cliffs of Rainier
ice covered and keeping our distance
stained by the sweat of mountaineers
and bruised by the cleats in their boots-
our pride protected our egos like the rivers
that fed the deer in the fields
-almost never equal eyes-
But when it happened, it really happened
a night's full moon rising in morning
and there we were: melting edges
quelled with a boundless light
Love: a word we rarely use in this context,
but not afraid to admit defeat.

SPIDER MEDICINE

Spent the day relocating spiders from their homes
Tucked in corners and on window sills
Refreshing the damp towels with dry ones
And wiping the slates clean

Chalk powder collected from years of ideas
Now just dust among the banana peels
And lemon rinds

Soon I will put the books and old letters in boxes
Stacked and labeled
Ready to ship

Twenty four days of sea sick pans and denim cut offs
Until the anchor drops

And then I weave again
New life made from shreds of tattered scarves stored through the winters

I can only hope you have your silk to share.