

1. cycles of storms

the storm raged
and as my boat tipped me into the sea,
I thought to myself
that falling into soft nothingness
is much better than falling into firm certainty.

that thought ricocheted off my inner walls until I woke up,
limbs scattered in all directions,
reclining on a bed of stone big smooth enough for me to stretch comfortably on;
my naked body hangs heavy on its sun-warmed surface
and I reach my arms out just over its edges
to knead its smooth, weathered curves with my fingertips
like they are made of clay

who could've known this to be my fate?
disparate elements metamorphosing under the same sun
lifetimes of repetition, cycles of storms,
and one lone result—
my very own terrestrial plane,
glossing in the sun like reposed silk,
waiting amidst nothingness to catch my fall.
but a glance at this stone from another angle might reveal something different
underneath, it could corkscrew down into the earth
or fall apart in sharp fragments
or attach itself to a million other stones just like it;
there could be nothing there at all.
as far as I know, it is a mere two-dimensional surface
floating on the edge of space
that I just so happen to be a passenger on.
it could be lost.
I suppose that, then, would make me lost, too.

still lying in the position in which I awoke,
now more seriously considering the infinitude of possibilities
in which this great form may exist below me,
I dare not move. I dare not change my perspective.
for it it does disappear below,
I could disappear along with it.

I roll onto my side and peer into its surface—
like looking billions of miles into the night sky—
hypnotizing darkness;
it appears always to recline in the shadow of something greater than it
and no amount of light could ever make a difference.
dark, as though somebody else painted it that way
as though this shade of darkness could not inherently exist
not completely black, but close to it
tinted with a certain color I've never before encountered
because I'm not sure if I can even call it a "color"
it is presence, it breathes, it insists upon itself.
like dipping virgin skin into a pool of liquid nitrogen

it wholly consumes me
and I can only describe it as
the sound of my own voice when it echoes

I close my eyes and feel that feeling of being in a space that's filled with some substance
between fluid and air
weightless.
passivity intoxicates me
I do not want anything.
mobility is a luxury I am content without affording
so long as I have this finite space to lay upon,
so long as the white sky pulses above me
so long as I have something, anything
to call my own
to squeeze
to surrender to
I should not want anything more.

but this feeling is short lived
even as the stone remains the same, I will change.
the sky will flood with scarlet thunder
and I will find the position I once laid comfortably in
to be suffocating.
as the winds increase in speed and intensity
my psyche mistakes stillness for paralysis
my great stone now feels ice cold to the touch.
it has lost its vibrancy
it has lost its depth
it has no meaning.
I peer into the eye of the storm above me and wonder,
how long have I been sitting, idly,
on this freezing rock?

soon, the only sound I can hear
is my own heart beating in a glass box
and when I can no longer suppress the urge to flee
when I've entertained every last fantasy
when I at last measure the distance between
a life I love
and a life I am determined to live
I grow sick to my stomach
hold my breath
count to ten
and jump into the unknown below me.

2. that replaces the question

i was born in a desert
where the singular thought surfaces, lingers, and negates itself
leaving me a biased observer
swimming between two planes
seeking different answers to the same question.
a question I cannot suppress,
and that I cannot entirely define,
but that nonetheless arises
each time the taste of salt lingers in my mouth for too long
each time I look at something ordinary, wish it was a different color,
then conclude that I am the only reason it couldn't be.

a question that becomes a problem
whenever I encounter you,
and at times when I encounter myself,
and which only silences
at the sound of music.

how desperately I wish to prolong the feeling that replaces the question,
a comfort like the smoothness of my own skin;
i cannot differentiate between order and chaos
both simply just exist
with me at their center.

still, i imagine how different my world may look
if the feeling weren't so fleeting
the question is there to teach me what i once knew,
but must have forgotten.
to probe me to find purpose in the arrangement of space
and the order of time.

the reason objects exist is for me to trace their edges with my index finger
the reason i exist is to dream of tracing everything i cannot reach;
to wish for anything more is to miss the point entirely,
is to look at the empty,
and see nothing beyond emptiness.

3. friction

some sensation I can only wish to control
 it creeps behind me
 a shadow drowned by ubiquitous sunlight;
 even if I can't feel it, I can see it.
 it turns the skies of my day a shade of winter
 and forces me to cavern my mental archives for ultraviolet thoughts

do I know you? I ask
 staring into a small emerald pool;
 like lemons, sunlight can be both yellow and pink
 and It lovingly grazes the tops of my cheeks
 while I press the softest parts of my body against warm sand,
 and wait for nothing in particular to happen

my life folds like mountains
 i wake up in the middle of the night with wide eyes and empty lungs
 thinking to myself all of the things that might possibly go wrong someday,
 wondering if fate could only exist in the mind

i sleep best in the latest hours of the morning,
 because i find that this is when the world is stillest.
 even though my purpose is to move, and i
 can feel this truth with every inch of me,
 i crave stillness
 because it allows for the abstract mind to animate itself
 and i am reintroduced to all of the things responsible for my suffering
 and to all of the reasons why i am still alive

whatever it is that lays in store
 i am not attached to,
 because anytime i look above me, i instantly find the moon
 and whenever i start to wander aimlessly, i meet a flower i've never seen before
 whenever i am unsure, i tilt my head back and breathe in the essence
 of all the life that has lived before me
 and all that will live after me,
 and i remember everything.

wind still provokes me,
 but on certain days I can see its full spectrum
 it breathes and comes alive,
 an elusive subconscious,
 telling me things i never knew.

still, i wish that i could write about an experience other than my own
 but all i have is sensation
 and faith that graces me from an invisible source;
 something tells me to keep moving,
 despite all the stillness that i crave,
 despite the intrigue of a silent night.
 I am evolved for patience,
 i am here to love, even if I don't know how,

i am meant to be my only master,
and to slip underneath the surfaces
that nobody else can see through.

4. something else

Do you ever ruin something by trying to improve it?
Everything around me looks like modeling clay
All I want to do is mold it all into something else
When I find a particular part of my world to be
Less flexible than I desire,
I become frozen from the neck-down in a block of ice

The only way out is to shatter all the material that surrounds me
Until nothing is left but empty space;
But emptiness is far better than immobility,
Emptiness can be sipped slowly
Emptiness can be transformed
Emptiness can be beautiful if I look at it a certain way,
But immobility is the nothingness from which no something could ever come.

Ice does not move, no matter how strong the will is.
Ice can only be destroyed by an external force,
Or persuaded into melting.
While my arms and legs twitch,
My eyes move frantically from object to object,
The dream to rearrange floods my nervous system;
I forget about everything else I need
And everything I already have
While I inscribe my best ideas on every last scrap of memory
And wait for the sun to come out.

I wonder, when I am finally freed from the ice,
If I will still have the same desires to mold and change,
Or if I will desire
Something else completely,
Or if I'll have spent so much time observing in stillness,
That I'll no longer want to change anything at all.

Sometimes, I'm grateful for the ice
If I spent my whole life in the desert,
If all I knew was empty space,
Then all of my rearrangements would go unnoticed.
They would make no difference to me, or to anybody else.

I'd be too busy rolling fluidly over unceasing plateaus
to notice a certain plant that needs watering,
Or a certain rock that needs overturning
For without the desire to interfere,
There is no desire to create.
Instead, I'd turn with the planet, little by little each day,

Until I am reduced to almost nothing,
Condensed into a seed,
And sprouted into something else.

5. *early spring*

All the blues drip slowly from cracks in the surface,
pool at the bottom,
and sink into the floor
I wait underneath to catch drops in my hands;

I lost track of time the day I dove in, head first,
and sunk too low to crawl back out
Now all that sustains me is the cold rain,
that floods into my subterranean shelter with no warning.

I've drowned so many times,
I forgot I need air to breathe

Eventually, the world will swallow me
But while the hole in my chest is filled with smoke,
I can relish safely in all the could-have-beens
and this can be enough for me.

Life is so beautiful when I don't contemplate my place in it
When I watch the morning glories unfold at around 4 a.m.
And the sky behind them sort of matches their color
It almost seems like they belong to one another
My bare arms absorb soft rain drops that fall every now and then
And the muddy earth underneath me does the same thing.
Perhaps all of us belong to each other.

Then the same cold wind comes out of nowhere and my skin tightens
As if to shield my inner world
But it hits, nevertheless
And I'm reminded of the mismatch between my two realities
Everything that I love about my life
Has only ever existed in a dream

And so I plan to sleep for as long as I can,
But I awake only an hour later
to the ice cold wooden floor.
A full moon hangs low over my head
I stand,
And we bow to each other.