

## **Aubade for Doppelganger**

Have you regained your faith in mirrors?  
Was it easy for you to be lost at first?  
Are you the knife, the raven, or the thorn?  
If you can, write a song for your held tongue,  
for your stolen sleep. The winters will be hard.  
One morning, a clot could pass through you like a storm,  
hair spilling down your back like leaves.  
I know you.  
You have measured the dark  
and found it lacking.  
You are not any closer to feeling found.  
There are still men left to forgive.  
In dreams, the village healer beads a necklace of serotonin;  
you swallow as many as you can.  
Every new moon an untaught alchemy,  
pines raising over the mountains like bone.

## **Imposter Syndrome**

At some point, the moon was assembled  
with the intention of surpassing human knowledge -  
molten, unremitting,  
arc of construction paper against the sky.  
In Utah, a man shot his girlfriend just because he could.  
No backstory, no preceding history  
of which anyone was aware.  
No wonder the parameters of human myth  
are so unbounded;  
no wonder we think we know someone  
we never knew at all.  
How ardently you can be afraid -  
the moon could be a planet, inhabited,  
flush with our worst fears of who might reside there,  
or just another glow transmitting into the dark,  
like the deep, momentary terror  
of a man slowing his car beside you  
only to realize he's arrived at home.

## **Elegy to Quarter-Life Crisis**

When a tree falls in a forest, the resulting gap  
leads to an explosion of butterflies.  
Imagine, killing a thing that gives life as it lays dying.  
Like suiciding that part of yourself that always needs  
to be in control, or watching a child twist the wings  
off cicadas, not out of malice  
but rather out of love, as if halting flight  
is a favor to the sky they drown in.  
You could be anything & still you choose to be this.  
Your adolescence of fables, your unmaking of beds  
or -- perhaps -- entering the wrong ones.  
Imagine, one day,  
years before you like an abacus,  
& the worst thing someone has ever done to you  
crawls quietly in its cage like an insect,  
body riddled with pink.

## **True Crime**

Is the term for the dawn purpling and giving itself back  
to the sky, or, an obsession with the space  
between missing & misunderstanding,  
which is the same width  
as the space between startling  
& starting again.

Sometimes, it's enough to believe people willingly disappear,  
that somewhere they move around in the world  
like fog pulled from breath in the cold,  
that you can begin again, & again, & again,  
until you find a life that suits you,  
and sometimes, it's too much to know  
a person gone missing  
can choose not to be found.

Not the way you wake blindly in the dark  
forgetting where you are,  
but the way a coast guard's beacon  
pierces through the night like a storm,  
not really searching for anything  
but its own reflection.

**Poem Written After Remembering That Anyone Can Die in Their Sleep  
At Any Time, Anywhere, Without Warning**

Every once in awhile, the phrase *stark raving mad*  
comes to mind, as if your sanity is lost first  
and then goes partying. As if anyone ever has any idea  
what's in store for us, as if every slow pulse of existence  
isn't perfectly calculated  
to ruin love & then rebuild it.

Standing against a red window, an aneurysm could bloom  
in your body like a tulip, or an arrhythmia  
unfold like a cocktail,  
something deep within you raised to the surface, at last,  
burning.

This, here, is our undoing:  
not enough reasons to stay  
and not enough to leave.

And still nothing but life could keep you away from life,  
could un-awe you from its cobalt thrill,  
its endless memories folded like cut stems,  
or the pure relief of hearing your own breath in the morning,  
gratitude rising like a spill of fire.