

“The Disruption II”

They are dredging the pond

the new brown landscape only
half a shock, not frightening
dug-up leaves crumpled around each other
in dirt, body sized

this is something I've seen or only
half seen
tried to talk to as if what happened didn't matter to us
the leaves and me

we've entered November heavily
with the strength I got to be
here

listen: I need to tell you something about sitting at that table
with stringy hair after a shower, shoving pills
down a cat's throat
rotting alive, because we cannot talk to each other
as if I've never been unrecognizable

they are dredging the pond

the trees there are silent, they know
sometimes ponds need to be dredged
the edges of the water have iced and the same geese as last year leave again
to come back in April

“C. Sprue, Jan. 2020”

I thought going under for twenty minutes
a dose of Propofol
would make all those years without myself irrelevant, a diagnosis

so I wouldn't have to have been
in that elevator with two men
or my sickness would have been damages
only intestinal
I wouldn't have to have been glassy-eyed in a car
with someone I'd never love after a ski trip or just
grocery shopping
or entombed
in an office chair

could this be the answer to end all the answers I wanted?
it's fine, it all started at birth
you got this from your mother, genetic depression
brought on by too much bread

a drive away from the hospital, I could feel the peace of it
after a physician said *Celiac*
and it would all have misted away in dawn

(what then of revelation on Mill Street? what
then, of the Cloud Room
where I already purged and screamed the weight of it under the blue down comforter?)

years of losing my brain to laminate hardwood
and gritty carpet and the corners of my lips
to a bathroom mirror wondering
who

 this

 was

could be *Celiac*
with one appointment I could turn the reason I needed to die into *Celiac*—my god

on the water
speaks to me and says I will not be made irrelevant
I am more than villi
more than atrophy, I will not be seen that way
with a camera
down your throat

“Gratitude”

Only two years ago on the coldest night I opened the window
to see how long I could stand it, practicing
and in this room, here, two nights ago
after you left I wanted to tell you about it

if anyone

brown eyes, Alaska, you had me
shaking

laughing when you scrawled

Depression!

across a wet window
oh to love freely, safely

“Body Apology”

I will write my body an apology
because it will not let me lie to it again

while I wait for America to apologize to itself
its own fields
and wolves and cloud-shadow herds of bison
in the heat of this March

I will not wait to feed you or
make you afraid to bleed
and think that we are going back to that low place
that hungry place

I don't have to wait for someone
to take the place of someone who keeps me awake at night
with lights and doors
like my mother did
or the boy from election night four years ago
as if this afternoon I don't deserve fresh grapes or
maple syrup

I don't know why I still think I have to wait
in this concrete, unmoving place

“House Cleaner’s Prayer”

What the government doesn’t know about what happens when I enter rooms:
I make them better

as I am, as America is, on my knees in dust
scrubbing someone else’s coffee stains

I rise to un-cobweb your ceilings

what I see in this stark hallway

what I’ve found in empty houses
what I bring
and what I leave there

what I clear away and what I make room for

it isn’t pennies
or toast crumbs

you see, we’re finding out
we’re better than ourselves