

grown

we wore gaudish costumes and spoke with
devilish tongues, pressed against my
back your hand with fingers crossed we
fooled even ourselves wearing masks of both
ambiguity and maturity mixing and rising to the
surface like the bubbles in your rum & coke we
fooled even each other wearing my mother's heels and
your father's tie we spoke of a future together your
job and my career drenched in wine-stained dreams from the
bottle you bought that morning, echoing through the scratches on
my record player we played house as well as we
knew how to, hiding our emotions like cards behind sleeves and
forgotten under the tables we stacked, we spun our feelings like the
webs we then destroyed, never talking too loudly with hushed voices we
never spoke out of turn we
fooled even me as I grew into my mother's face I
worried about a future together; your absence clear and your
presence intoxicated and captivating we were
children playing with matches and burning ourselves with
the fire but never learning, we
fooled even who we were before, becoming two people who
spoke in ancient riddles and spoke with the mystery of the
moonlight and cheated the clocks we
grew into each other but we never grew
up. having sleepovers and breaking promises we
pointed at the stars and wished on the clouds that
passed the moon we gazed with childlike eyes at
every possibility that was too high for us to reach but
we grabbed anyway, watching it all crumble and fall
down slipping through our fingers we shattered our own
illusion and tore through who we
were content with pretending to be.

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something is growing in the garden

there are no hands to tend to
the garden, plants growing skyward, roots heavy in the
soil, weeds expanding, claiming the expanse
spreading uncontrollably, quietly, untended to

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here, the tomatoes grow in candle holders, the
soil sticks under my fingers and collects. the tedium of
sowing, pulling weeds on sleepy saturdays is a
distant memory, but one that clings like
sunlight to the leaves, watered with small tears welling, pooling and
collecting at the bottom.

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I remember when they took the tree down, too
many rotten roots and broken branches. in the
soil and mulch years later came new life,
leaves growing pointed toward the ground, the
cycle continued.

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what grows in the holes that we sow ourselves? who
waters, who tends, who keeps their weeds from spreading,
consuming. how deep the roots, now connected, how
do trees fall together when kept apart

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in a different life

in a different life, I dragged paintbrushes across
the striking white, watched pictures unveil themselves, whispering secrets to
the wind, catching colors in the paint seeping through

in a different life, I danced between the
moonbeams, fabrics weaving themselves through my
legs and binding my toes to the
ground with the heels rooting upwards. a
body light, settling in the dust

in a different life, my hand cuts on the jagged rock, heaving my
body towards the peak, legs catching underneath to support
them. generations of men etched into the same mountains, snow collected on the
noses of their stone faces, converged by
wind and water.

i have lived a thousand times and will live a
thousand more, dancing through the days, open chest and
bare face, teasing the morning clock, kept awake by
the things I am not and
may never have been

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the steps taken

I can't see the picture in full, because it
moves like I do, retaking dance steps in
reverse, leaps, bounds across the floor, landing
as I leave the ground, pressing ankles to asphalt, heels and
hips aligned, falling slowly into the
dust. remembering in feeling, the heat climbing up the
subway grates to lick my feet, the air catching under my
shoes.

I remember the walk home, steps heavy, each took bringing me
closer to that doorway, that doorway, hair catching in the breeze.
running up those stairs, I'll remember it every time
or when my feet dragged behind me, heavy with a backpack full of
sighs carried all day or when I knew I wandered back to
sleepless nights, teasing the midnight clock, kept awake from
the things I want — locked to unlock, to let in the
air and let out another, the whole place breathing heavy.
the beat has been lost, I can't repeat those steps anymore, but
paced out perfectly, I am taken back to that place
or that place or
that place or that

place, each engrained in my memory — pieces tied together by strings
dangling out in front of me, too far to pull at
too tight to come undone

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