

Walking Resurrections

you lover of language
who taught, and reiterated, you who
knew how the power of words
changes perception.

we flocked to your deathbed,
in our final plea for wisdom,
and stood still, mouths agape, like
trees in your bedroom.

refuting all you preached,
diluting your message. love doesn't matter.
you said bitterly,
words are empty.

he, now a corpse with furrowed brow
free of disillusion. confused we fled,
me from you. us becoming I.
isolated in sorrow all

your followers remembered,
banding together we rolled from your grave
en masse, a sea of stones, your posse of
free spirited walking resurrections,

living proof you refused to see.
raising our greyhounds, in tall glasses, extra ice,
reminding one another
even saviors are only human.

Final Rest

The dead face the estuary in rows
off an ordinary road where the tide
is low. No signs, no fence, a black man mows
tall sweet grass and weeds, where old tombstones hide.

No cremation for my body. Instead,
give me the place where the Gullah once lived
and toiled. Staying in this haven of red
sunsets where the birds with happy songs give

sweet melodies that serve as lullabies
in this final resting place where they lay.
The ancestors in broken shackles try
to forget the bondage of old ways
choosing instead gold sunsets at their head,
dawn at their toes in a sweet final bed.

The Past

is now
and now
and now.
Goodbye
Goodbye
Goodbye
I will miss
some of you.

Three a.m feedings
after 12 hour work days.
still I wake
every night at 3
though you live
in the guesthouse
with the girlfriend
who drives the fiat.

Not your fault
I drink whiskey
when the phone
rings past 10.
head on collision
one dress, sweaters
shoes, toothbrush, jeans
last minute flight to

what was home
when I was your age.

He, the first
to stir maternal instinct.
the first to call me aunt.
I sang there is a young cowboy
who lives on the range.
my first funeral.
The past

is now
and now
and now.

Root Systems

In the vast forest
an individual trees growth can
be determined by who its neighbors are.
Bark needs a living tree to grow.

If the heart mapped pathways on land
The forest would be its metaphor.
How does this long-dead stump find
a way to produce new living tissue?

One singular fungus transfers
from one root system to another,
like sugar being borrowed from a neighbor,
and feeds the dead back to life.

I kicked and screamed and clawed,
sure that loving you was killing me.
I demanded solitude.
I'm not the enemy, you said

until I drank what you offered
Without knowing I needed
what I never wanted.
Without realizing
I was coming back to life.

Blackberries

long before death she said,
go fetch me some blackberries for cobbler.
I ran to the woods, and saw
the center of the bramble thick
with untouched fruit.

climbing into thorns I
picked the last of summer's
plump ripe berries
hanging heavy on the vine,
staining my hands, my shirt,
my mouth.

thorns scraped my arms but
those wounds looked nothing like
her hands, riddled with scars from
cotton picking, though
I wished they did.

swatting bugs, wiping sweat,
my bowl finally full
I returned
and watched her fill the pot
without a written receipt.

sugar, flour, tartar, ginger
a dash of this, a handful of that,
the concoction bubbled
into a brew of all my
summer-time childhood memories.