

## **Bare**

Most species  
Bare their teeth  
As a threat  
As a display  
Of aggression  
Of leadership

It is a reminder  
That these  
Clenched jaws  
Can and will  
Open your  
Yielding throat

I want you to think of this  
The next time I smile.

## Red Heat

I am in you  
In your chest  
I had to pull your ribs apart like double doors  
They cracked like an egg on the edge of a skillet  
My hands slid along the inner curve of your rib cage  
Slippery with oily fat  
Steam rises from your hot insides, and I begin to perspire  
As one does over an open grill  
I thrust my rigid hands into you, and I feel pulsing,  
Beating against my cold skin  
Submerging myself in red, wet heat- the chill I've felt for so long  
Begins to dissipate  
I twist my arms and grasp your organs like dishes in a hot sink  
I'll clean you  
You yell "Order up!" and I collapse into soft innards,  
Comfortably trapped  
This is a different kind of embrace  
One that doesn't complicate things  
I'll stay until you're finished, until you think you feel full  
But then I'll rise from your chest and leave my hollow  
You will never be whole again

## **Always The Bridesmaid, Never The Bride**

It doesn't really worry me  
Everyone succeeds you anyway  
I will surpass you as well  
And you just stay where you are  
Like you have, like you will

Four years on repeat  
A time insurmountable to only you  
They come in, They come out  
They will surpass you as well  
Like they have, like they will

O, big fish in your little pond-  
Swimming in waters so shallow  
Righteous King of the guppies and the mayflies  
Until they find you  
Belly-up  
Your tiny twig crown sunk into the muddy bank

O, big important spire of a small town  
Haven't you heard that they haven't heard of you?  
Brick  
By  
Brick  
You will crumble  
Your life's work no more than a murmur  
You'd be lucky to get a footnote

When they bury you  
Few will gather, I will show  
With me I'll bring a bouquet of  
Black-Eyed Susans  
And pluck the petals  
One by one  
To prove you weren't even worth a  
Flower  
To me  
To them  
To anyone

Your remains decaying under a bench  
Surrounded by scattered cigarettes and spit  
And you just stay where you are  
Like you have, like you will

## **During & After Your Second Mistake**

The next morning, you were gone.

The intoxicated passion had left your eyes  
And was replaced with your regular glassy gaze  
That would not meet my own.  
At that exact moment,  
I knew last night meant nothing.  
The cool, crystalline words you lied  
Became room temperature skim milk.

I tried to be upset.

I cried and kicked and screamed  
Teeth gnashing and biting into the morning sun  
Canines sinking into hot star  
Draining it's explosive fury

I wanted to be volcanoes  
And melt your tasteless, thin words  
My magma spilling over your listless stare  
Corneas popping like egg whites left on the stove

I wanted to be lightning on a summer day  
And you to be a tall, dry oak  
Standing so prestigiously  
Until my thunder roars across the land  
And I strike you down  
Splitting bark into splinters into flame.

I remember you  
Tight-lipped,  
Eyes narrowed with foggy hatred,  
One hand balled into a fist and pushed into my chest plate,  
The other gripping my throat.  
You thrust into me, the pounds  
Vengeful, Loathing.

And yet I still felt as calm as night.

Instead, I was the ringing silence  
After you, the firearm, shot

I am the solemn calm of heads  
Bowed at a funeral  
You were the violent act that  
Brought us here

You were the sharp inhale-

I am the long exhale.

This is the second time we both made the same mistake.  
Yours was lying. Mine was believing you.  
I tried to find the gusto to hate you but the chasm is so deep, so dark  
That you can't hear or see the bottom.  
Everything from last night dropped into my void,  
Stretched and broke apart  
Before it became less than a whisper  
In my hollow.

You could throw Sisyphus's boulder into the depths of my soul-

And I wouldn't even ripple.