

## **A Wisdom Tooth's Complaint**

We used to fit each other so nicely, you and I  
now a time capsule glance at younger years, I'm  
tucked away in a corner where only your tongue can reach  
we outlived each other  
not through my growth but your recession into this  
weaker smaller version of you.  
Where's your bite?

We used to chew on the raw, the muscle together  
a thing of the past you say, and I answer by  
returning to my assigned spot in the composition of you  
still, I grow from your tender pink and root myself in it  
no one could take my place. My pulp runs too deep  
if I pinch a nerve, sapiens,  
would it take a bite out of you?

Your others, repetitions of a milky first, are simply  
another of their kind. Yet,  
when enamel etches  
you reward them with a crown  
push and pull, you run your silk along my sides before  
you rip me from my core  
cutting into your own flesh and bone  
to remove me from your life. You bark on and on  
when I know it's in your nature to bite.

I used to fit into your mouth so nicely,  
don't you remember? Us,  
I with my age-old wisdom and you with your hominin bite.

## Limescail

The Brita filters its last gallon and I preach  
I don't taste a difference either way  
between right and wrong minerals  
hard goes just as well down the pipe  
maybe a hint of metallic from the pipes  
like blood sitting in the ridges where teeth  
sink into my gums  
after biting myself raw.

Company never arrives so I never leave  
to buy a new filter to replace the old  
but then you come  
ask me for a drink of anything. Impatient  
on the stained counter, your manicure goes  
tap tap tap  
while it runs into the glass  
on the naked vinyl, your heel goes  
tap tap tap  
while I chew the inside of my cheek digging  
for red underneath  
the tender pink.

Calcium asteroid belts in a pressure turbid galaxy  
you're a disappointed deity on the outside  
looking in  
and as such you mercifully drink the liquid universe up  
take it in  
wash down the hard on your tongue with a soft gulp of saliva.  
You taste the difference.  
the lead thallium mercury and copper  
stick to your throat like blood make you sick but  
only to the stomach  
always to the stomach.

Spit Arrowhead maybe even sticky blood  
to you anything tastes better than  
the water from my tap

## Upstream Duet

Don't look through and  
don't look at me, so  
the crow's feet growing from  
dry water lines  
won't branch, imprint treads on my mind  
snow untouched unbothered by the  
have-been stream beds on your skin, as off the bones  
the marrow skims to now reveal  
an older you.

I don't look, as you ask me to  
Visit the me I was instead  
Old me, who flowed in seasons that  
reveal someone with looser joints  
looser morals, looser change  
someone who'd rather lose than change  
How selfish I was then.

—Relentless you were, friend  
with overflowing freshet eyes  
Patches of grass under slush ice, they take me back some of the times  
To when you were that river high  
and I merely a toothless sturgeon  
following you to the ocean.

My desert valley eyes now turn and see your  
flatland tundra face that's  
colder perhaps but arid, too, as I am in my older days  
then I visit older you, free from all my old mistakes and  
wonder if it's good or sad  
you grew up  
older  
much too fast.

## Household Diplomacy

Soap follows your rolled-up sleeves, the wine glass  
slips so suddenly  
Shards pit-patter scatter to the  
sink's bottom, past the cutlery  
Rubber gloves won't care to reach  
the dishes you leave up to me

Pruney crests spring from wet fingers, and dull rings  
stain. I'm blue as bruised,  
a knife in a sea of spoons, drowning in their ooze and greases  
I anticipate, foresee it  
the licking of the sharpened blade, but  
the edge still greets me there  
cuts me open near the drain

Pain! The deepest cut I've ever seen—no now wait  
don't helt-skelter falter yet. The band-aids  
in the cabinet are nowhere to be found  
you dredge me pell-mell fallen down  
a sous-chef bleeds out on the ground, so  
fucking hig-piggledy clumsy, I'm  
the toughest chore around