

**the Leaving Day**

Love, no longer, is a primary source.  
Our lips meet only transitively,  
at the top of the cat's head or  
the mouth of the bong.

Our conversation values simplicity over substance.  
Brevity, my worst nightmare,  
achilles heel, has  
made itself your home.

Maybe, in some dystopian dream we are  
perfect complements,  
But in the here & now  
we are abstinent of each other.

These are not the wasted years.  
We are not completed stories.  
This, I promise, is the breaking  
of waves, the future we have made—

the incarnation of my happiness.



**It'll be a month tomorrow.**

The morning was long today. I was  
slow to rise and am worse for it.  
My chest is a cavity where something's decaying,  
every song on my 'Best of the Decade' playlist  
drills deeper at the rot.  
And they all fill the space so perfectly.

It has nothing to do with seeing your ring on the bathroom sink this morning.  
It doesn't have to do with any of this.

I'm holding yesterday's snow in my fist.  
Nevermind the way it burns my skin, I  
have to know how long it takes to melt completely.  
Something about mind over matter,  
or endurance, or the  
price of destroying something.

It has nothing to do with seeing your ring on the bathroom sink this morning.  
I haven't worn mine in weeks.

I notice my friend's bumper stickers, my  
eyes searchlights for neurons. I can't  
stop thinking about holding him. Nothing  
like sex, just romantic in the sense that  
I'd like to cry into him and kiss his tattoos—  
shameful, semi-artistic and disgusting.  
He looks like all my oddly pleasant monochrome dreams  
and I just want to sleep in him for a while.

It has nothing to do with seeing your ring on the bathroom sink this morning.  
I promise, I felt nothing.

### Therapy Session in Wegmans

I don't ever remember a time where Dad's hands didn't look like that.  
Cinderblock fingers with smooth palms, I once grabbed  
the wrong hand at Disney World and knew it before it snapped away from me.  
I ran back to my father's voice in the crowd as he  
caught my shoulders in his solid grasp.  
His hands are the same now.  
He holds my left hand with the exact tightness of comfort,  
like the grip of a weighted blanket.

Mom's hands have weathered. They are the same fragile fingers  
that held my head as she kissed me on my crown, only littered with lines.  
Evidence of becoming a mother then an enemy and a mother again.  
Her hands smile like the lines by her eyes.

We are sitting in the Wegmans cafe.  
I am studying our hands, bridging the space  
between my fingers and theirs,  
my truth and theirs,  
my love and theirs.

It is a question of 100 or 99.  
To give all or all but one.  
Dad is shaking my hand as he implores me—  
Never give it less than everything I have.  
That way, regret never comes from lack of trying.  
It is the philosophy of a man with stone-soft hands.  
Give everything, feel everything.  
He leaves for the bathroom and my right hand  
finds the gaps between my mom's fingers.

It is a question of 100 or 99.  
To give all or all but one.  
Mom pauses to share our breathing before reminding me—  
Never give away everything I have.  
That way, I never lose all of myself.  
It is the philosophy of a woman with deceptively wrinkled hands.  
I've lived it, she says.

Not with her words, but with the lines by her grey eyes.  
Dad comes back from the bathroom.

There is a moment shared in silence.  
We all know how well I'm going to do,  
I just don't believe it yet.  
The last tear falls into the empty paper cup  
that held my tea.

There, I see the 100.  
The type of tear I'll cry in thanks for the only people  
I'll ever love with my entire self.

## Reconciliation in the Second Person

### *Wrath*

You know how frogs in boiling water  
won't jump out as the temperature  
rises?  
Oblivious as they're dying, unable to  
save themselves.  
Being with you was something like that.

### *Gluttony*

After the break. After it ended  
you asked me to buy your groceries  
took everything I could give, unsatiated.  
"enough"  
    is not a word in your vocabulary.

### *Greed*

After the break. After it ended  
you asked me to buy your groceries  
took everything I could give, unsatiated.  
"enough"  
    is not a word in your vocabulary.

Neither is reciprocation.

### *Sloth*

Smoked yourself dumb and drowsy,  
let the  
    dishes  
    laundry  
    trash  
    pile up.  
(like you.)  
    Languish.

*Lust*

.

*Envy*

The final pieces of myself,  
the only things I hadn't surrendered  
to us (meaning you)  
with one tantrum they were yours too.  
Stolen years of private work,  
personal identity,  
and of course,

*Pride*

It must be so simple, your world  
your synapses  
your grey-pink matter.  
To think everything was going well.  
So naive of you

when I had been boiling your water.