

# Scabs

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*There's a thick, quiet Angel*

assigned to the back of my head, my scalp  
I can feel him with the fingers of my left hand

working hard, through the night when it's safe  
for him to weave and sew, beneath my hair

every morning, still, he's built another tapestry  
I imagine him on his stomach, his feathers

stretching out in all directions, a starfish  
belly to my bleeding wound, holding me in

keeping my pillow grey, even attending to  
single hairs, survivors swaying in the pooled red

I have often been afraid of angels, but not this  
one, I have no reverence for his art, no holy fear

or perhaps I love his work so dearly, I  
sabotage it every morning with the hope

that he'll never stop returning to save me.

*I know that it's profound, the livingness of things*

the sea cutting through the sandbar, her  
tidal arms embracing the bloomy marsh

the clover fields, microscopic, so many  
electric-green bosoms pressed to the sky

the blue heron, the ballerina, the sneeze  
of a hundred swallows in perfect swarm

yet, the more I walk in the world the more  
I am squinting through a hole, a small

sliver of unrelenting light, blurry and bidding  
me close the very eyes I cannot see, blue

I am straining and mis-pronunciating  
a stranger to these perfect days.

*If I can't hide you inside of my body*

I don't want anything to do with you, *Ocean*.

If I can't thread you through a needle  
and pull you through the lengths of me—

I'll hide my face from you, *River*.

If I can't press my face into you  
and you keep touching me with  
all your fingers, refusing to be seen—

I'll deny the existence of you, *Scattered Rain*.

*Morning Mist.*

*Passing Cloud.*

*Dew on my nose.*

At least in your iciest form, you muffle  
the hisses and hums of creation—

at least I can hear my feet against you  
and pack you into a small white ball  
and hold you against my skin—

until the life-heat of me makes you  
disappear, *Snow. Snowball.*

*Snowstorm.*

*Snow and Ice.*

Remember me on my stomach?  
Waiting at the moss edge?  
Listening, expectantly—

as you roared, *Waterfall at Night*.

*Living Water.*

*Water of Life.*

*I woke up to the cat peeing on my leg*

like a reminder of Sunday school,  
Sunday, September the 5th, 6:17am.

*Passing of the Peace*

like a reminder that I am from the dirt  
and to the dirt I will return

*Prayer of Confession*

(Time of reticent silence)  
that I should not have touched myself last night  
that even my righteous acts are filthy rags

*Promise of Forgiveness*

You all, like sheep—

like my favorite pink blanket with a silk hem  
stinking woolen, sopping on the bathroom floor

You all, like sheep have—

been pissed on by your mothers and fathers.

This concentrated, stockyard-yellow reality seeps  
hot into my skin while the sheets tremble and click  
in the washing machine, that mechanical waterfall.  
She's dying of liver failure, she's jaundice, she cannot  
eat or drink. Suddenly, I'm afraid she's a portal to  
another world sending messages with her eyes.  
Suddenly, I'm paranoid, like sheep— *cont.*

have gone astray, each to your own way.  
Return to your rest, oh my soul.

*Please Stand*

Play the harp! Strike the tambourine!  
The cat peed on me this morning!

I make coffee, I sit in the morning sun, my stomach  
churns like the machine. A dog barks at me, suspicious

sharp eyes beneath the yard fence.

*Pour out your hearts to him in worship*

And how is it that all I want is you, oh Lord of the Sabbath?  
You who made me, who formed me in all the filthiness of  
my mother's womb, You who made the mountains with their  
lions, the desert boulders with their teeth.

*Join the anthem of all God's people this morning in the words of the Psalmist, David*

How long, Oh Lord?  
How long, Oh Lord, will fathers rape their daughters?  
How long, Oh Lord, will we fear the fowler's snare?

My schizophrenic neighbor with all his knives  
and bibles. You have crushed me with commands  
I cannot meet. I cannot bear to fulfill your commission.

*Prayer of Petition*

Please, take me up in your arms?  
Press me to your neck, Oh God of my humanity?  
We're down here squirming in it, hacking up our depravity.

And even if my cry reached presidents, publishers  
or television hosts, who could comfort me but You?

Abba, Papa.

Yahweh, breath of my body.

Lord of the living, and Lord of the dead.

*Lapis Lazuli*

I am the same  
 again, seeing messages  
 the beads hanging from my  
 cat's hot sleeping body;  
 trying to fit too much  
 Wolves in the basement,

remembering and forgiving;  
 My respite is the color blue.  
 thickness, Lapis spirit—  
 beside me when I bled into  
 my hostess.

To be with the blue I walked  
 Montana. First year, crying for my  
 secret place; the cabinet of her womb,  
 but still being alive. I drew a circle in the  
 blue again this evening, holding the rocks  
 encircles me, lying here,  
 to obey the sky.

circling always.

child, the same woman, infant bleeding again, weeping  
 beneath the kitchen counter, above the trampoline, in  
 bedroom closet. I'm resting again on my side next to the  
 recovering from fear, from insanity, from drunkenness, from  
 earth into my stomach, from lying and bad dreams.  
 rising water, endless waves. Every circle offers new

breathing in Lapis everywhere, Lazuli in everything.  
 Just below the silver pinions of the sun setting. That tangible  
 the same that walked with me in London and slept  
 the sheets I scrubbed to hang on the line, apologizing to  
 Tiptoeing into the wide bathroom, tiled and windowless.

the same slow and methodical steps as I did in  
 mother, begging to go back to that  
 the sweetness of not yet being born  
 snow covered windshield and found  
 and blackened cacti. Lazuli  
 as faithfully as my own womb breaks and bleeds  
 They are the same yesterday and today,