

Gaia, My Mother

My mother was hard to ignore.
But I wasn't.

A wishing acceptance from her
denied
if I ever caught
the eyes
in the back of her highlighted head.

Coveting the toys of infants,
comparing me to playmates,
jealousy
permitting her to be cruel.

Donning the distance
of a world map
in a single room
was her idea
of motherhood.

The biggest imaginings there were
she were to pursue,
flight-filled destinies
I did not fit well to
that displayed themselves
like actors in a damp, blinding theatre
born from synapses and struggle

much like me.

Am I but another figment?

The Art Of Keening

Foreteller of deaths,
destroyer of civility,
breaking the one-way
hushed promise we made
with the Church
under tithe and till
to remain silent
in the wordless face
of death.

When I first
had a mind to keen,
I watched Midsomer,
all the women heaving
together.
Pugh wailed
for the dead
and they compassionately
mimicked her agony.

I thought
that's what every woman needs
is to grieve
their squelching world
in unison,
loudly,
disruptively.

Because grief is a disruptive thing
that requires something equally haunting
to contain us

from its grasp
so that we do not
live
in the fleeting
in between.

Keening was said to have been invented by Brigid
a goddess who shrieked as the soul
of her son
left his broken body.

These primitive, whole body
laments
threatened men worshipping motives
to keep a woman
stifled.

Funerals became less
healing,
more contained
for the sake of our own feeble souls.

Now, we hold grief too close
till it rots to depression
in our striking arms.

Torments cannot leave
without shame reeling them
back in.

and therefore,
they can never be fully
felt.

All you grieving,
go to the graveyard
of angelic tombs,
fruitless trees.

Let us
throw our heads to the starless skies
and wail with the Banshees
tonight.

**Based on the Irish legend of the Banshee, a female spirit who was thought to herald the death of loved ones by wailing. This legend most likely originated from women who would sorrowfully lament at funerals to grieve their deceased. This was known as keening, and could be heard across the village. Later, the Church began to disapprove of this form of grieving during funerals.*

My Trauma Made Me "Strong", Huh?

Beyond affliction
you'll find
I barely
recognize my own self.

My eyes water
like an alzheimer patient's,
tortured by the presence
of their past.

What wandering roads await me?

I dare not

travel further.

My place is here,
under the heather,
hiding as I did
when your voice came running,
stomping it's demands.

My strength is only magnified
by my weakest breaths.

A curse,
to be so invincible.

The Regrettable Life

This specter of a life
nearly lived,
aborted by my
lack of something,
I know not what,

brings me to shivers,
a tireless ghost
warping my mind
raising my ego.

Worst of all
I'm the only one who sees it
and believes in
it's palpable potential.

When I tell others

about the life nearly lived,
when I say,
"I could have been something."
They only shrug and carry away
confirming
that in this life
I am nothing.

My only comfort-
that I was nearly real.

How Grateful I Must Be ("There's always someone worse off than you.")

Fetching pails of water
when the brimstone
catches
behind your sorry teeth.

Craning to hear
the silent words
of a god
who has yet
to let me flee.

Gracious
I must be,
you say,
in the face
of yet another
impressive decay.

The anger simmers,

hurries to my skull,
red-hot,
not spilling
an ounce.

One day,
it will pour out,
warming my lap,
scalding every step.

One day,
I will let it
consume the earth
you crumble to.