Starburst

in psychology class we did an experiment with
Starburst candy
each student ate a piece, eyes closed
to see if we could tell which flavor we got
free from influence of the wrapper
I could not tell which flavor I got
sweet but indistinct

what if all we needed was
one key
piece of knowledge
that could change how we experience everything
unlock the revealing lens
invite us in to savor
open doors to colors, flavors
sensations stunning, naturally
inherent in this galaxy
if only we took off the blindfold and had
some sign
some definition
some answer
or maybe the dark was freedom

when I was young I loved *Starburst* candy
as I grew I developed
resistance
to the artificial flavors
plastic texture
only wanted what was real
beyond suggestion, imitation
sights on the cosmic, grandiose
ultimately important
unquestionable
beyond a strawberry *Starburst*
true as
a lemon black hole
a blue raspberry comet
the honest, enduring
cherry supernova

Lucky the Bookworm

as the world turns
as the worm turns
Lucky turns
he's a bookworm
turns a new page
reads a new word
sees a new world
from the wisdom
of the sages
through the ages
compressed in pages
Lucky escapes
into the apples
Red Delicious
Granny Smith
Pink Lady
Honeycrisp
how crisp
how sweet
how juicy
how tart
bites the flesh
drops the core
orchard floor
nature smart
seed a start
Lucky worm
turns his own way
th ro ugh the g r a s s e s
opens own can
shows that he can
race the heart rates
opens flo o d g a t e s
castle kingdoms
worlds of wisdom
for the masses
compressed in pages
from the sages
through the ages

Fabric of the Game

where is my ballerina doll?
and who swapped her for this rag doll?
how can this be fair?
the rag doll spent days in bed
in standing lost her balance
she recalls the ballerina and gets some steps
close but not exact

this fragile figure I watch
struggling through the day
spirit whispers to her
I'll keep you close
swaddle you in clouds of cotton
kindle your laughter with
kisses of cashmere
take care of you
as best I can, my doll

somehow growing in quiet knowing
as this body and the world around
seem to unravel
spinning wheel awry
numb to needles of shock
but itching under pressure
like outgrowing a spandex suit
which had nearly become skin
close but not exact
ready to refashion
ripping out the seams

porcelain dolls and plush toy animals
astutely
aligned across the bed
assured
me in their wise eyes
that growing jaded in upheaval
was no way to win
imagination is mandatory

rabbits in the yard
hop about in peace
play carefree
gobble down a fern in one go

fully fledged in tights and tutu
as armor, fabric of invincible passion
ready for challenge now
to reclaim identity
gracing ballet shoes upon my toes
satin ribbons (forgetting the rag doll) winding around ankles
(if only)

(for a moment)

I glance through the window
into bunny's beady eyes
imagine and inquire
may I listen
to your
quiet for a while
may I be
in your peace
like porcelain
may I be
aligned
in your skin
close and exact
may I be
your plush softness
if only for a moment

the thread of healing winding miles
the rabbits hopping
chasing
playing all the while
we'll attend to our toys
we'll mend our costumes
imagination in our skin
we'll dance however we can

Nocturne

returning to body in the fuzzy, early hours
light, tingling, spacious
clear and still
eyelids lifted the veil in perfect timing
at the cadence of the dream
echoes of tinkling piano keys
ushering awareness between worlds

seven nights following the autumn equinox
the waxing gibbous moon had made her way
around the roof and through witching hour clouds
staring through the bedroom window into my psyche
striking a dissonant chord
prodding me to remember where I go
as if I had just been grasping her face
illumination and shadow

I know him from waking time
I remember
I took his hand in my left
he wanted a compelling reason why we should be together
I would study the art of persuasion for such a sole proposal
his glorious music, palette of hues
autumn leaves bright and splendid
against the overcast heavens

I did not recognize her from waking time
I remember
she took my right hand in hers
she wanted a compelling reason why we shouldn't be together
I could only say that I didn't think of myself in that way
her melody sweet and warm, wandering to resolve
in the fuzzy soundscapes between a black key and a white
I held their hands

body both heavy and light
pressed against the bed
as a pane of glass
someone transparent on the other side
I felt for them and felt
a note escape from my heart

harmonies whisper through the veil
tingling nerves
deep and steady breath of quiet hours
I held the moon
fingers brushed a lullaby
palms cradled her glowing face
in the space
between a black key and a white

Larimar

solid and polished
running a spectrum of shapes around my wrist
narrow sharp to oblong smooth
sampling shades of blue
from that paradox of choice wall
of paint chips at the hardware store

robin's egg, summer sky, tranquil sea
transported to a tropical island
breathing in a blissful breeze
bathing in this serene circle of stones
ideal meshing of cool and warm
slipping into a silky spa

liquid and yielding
waters' memory
infusing skin with
crystal clear
knowledge of ancient civilizations
language of dolphins
ethereal and distant
mermaid songs

sun blessing sea in shimmers
bathing in a halo of light
baptized in hymns of
vibrations, verses, evidence
encoded in endless reservoir

for eternities

coasting in circles around the island
not sailing far from shore
today
the sun and stones and splashing foam
told me it was time to
swim out to the voices
speak with the dolphins
sing with the mermaids