

four gospels

anis

I.

rape is a word i only ever knew
from watching evening news over cereal
& hoping that it'd never happen to me.

i was 18.

he was taller:
built like a wardrobe,
twisted rose lips, montenegrin
or from whatever other culture
along that ragged coast.
it made him mysterious,
charming, with danger
spelt like you're cute,
let's hang out.

he kissed me on my birthday
which i allowed —
behind a yellow house cut through by dark water,
a swing unused, grass untrimmed
who i'd know as bed the day he'd make me bleed
under a full moon on a warm october night.

II.

rape is a process.

on his shoulders, i had no idea
of where the cold wind blowing south
was taking me —

we were many hanging out that night,
we had fun, we were drunk,
young hope in our eyes,
it was impossible to believe it'd all be lost
within a fraction of a shot
& a living burial.

he held me when i tumbled
the smell of cheap vodka masked my perfume
a fragrance asking help, but also come closer
i don't really know where i am,
where are my friends?
it's gonna be fine, he says
but somehow in my chilling sweat
i knew it wasn't —
& then the sky broke
& he fell over me
as deluge.

III.

rape is october,
rape is grass under my nails
as i clenched the earth
hoping to become an insect,
hoping to become dirt
better to be gone than to be macerated.
his sweat mixed my tears in burgundy rage
on the baby blue blanket he had the courtesy of bringing:
this way your back won't be wet

what about my heart made liquid
dripping my self-worth, squandered
infiltrating the red dirt under
made redder from the blood
the cries, the please Lord let me Die's

they lasted all night, until you were tired
& i was wasted —
which you made sure to remind me
for months after.

i laid down curled after you left,
begging the moon to take me home,
to tell me it was a dream,
one freud would pin on my father leaving
just as you did after ravishing,
& i was alone
& no one heard my prayer.

IV.

you came back to grab me,
tender this time —
were you guilty i stayed alive
were you afraid of what i'd say
when we'd meet in the cafeteria the next day
& exchange eyes, our friends privy of your soul
dying, traded for stolen pleasure?

maybe you think it was worth it.

you brought me to your room laid me,
still. half-naked on your bed,
i didn't cry anymore, but i whimpered
broken, no longer afraid —
i wasn't in this body anyway;
it was there, but emptied

on your sheets, your body crashed
against mine, skin made turbulent waves
turning as your hold grew stronger:
on a twin bed there's less room for fighting.

everyone is asleep next door,
you should be quiet,
you're hotter that way
& i was —

no voice could match the screaming
that bellowed inside my stomach, mind
screeching across nerves, veins
& you made me hard —
a shame i'd bear as proof of my guilt
which you made sure to remind me
for months after.

V.

rape is an open wound that stops hurting
but never heals.

sometimes when the moon shines
it sends me back to the grass
it sends me back to your polka dotted sheets
it sends me back to showering through dawn
to erase your burns from my milk skin,
& i would never manage —
& i would never sleep again —
& i haven't still —

once you held me on that warm october night
you stole a part of me i'll never get back
'cause you threw it away,
the moment you finally came.

wednesday

each morning
blue, gold or crimson
sunbeams filter in raw
through the open white blinds
of the makeshift home i call
my body —

each morning
their warmth steals my dreams
& i lie awake, immobile:
i feel the beams cut through my skin
and i choose to give up
and i choose to give in
to lie awake for as long as i can
before shivers crawl deep inside
& my body sets itself on fire
& then in motion to start
a new day —

could today be another
day of pain, sorrow
can i be happy tomorrow
ever would be nice sometime
maybe Wednesday, it'll be sunny
& the beams will cut deeper
the faces around remind me
of the things i said
of the things that saddened
lilac blossoms,
i took them out on the morning
i jumped in front of a truck
wishing never to come back —

i close my eyes again
ignore the rising heat in the room
is this how Hell feels like
i'll discover in just time,
i shut the blinds of my eyes
wishing to be someone else's
body,
mind, soul —

i squeeze my eyes and pray away
the voices,
the struggles that are mine
burden alone, like Christ
but i don't resurrect,
and that is the miracle

response to psalm 91

I will say of the Lord, "He who left me here to suffer,
my God, Why Have You Forsaken
Me?" —

no trust left inside
painstakingly walking towards my calvary
no falling men by my side,
i'm barely just alive, the cross down
my crown of thorns comes from your
Hands, the terror of the night your Blood
all over mine, interchanged
but no communion —

am i damned for screaming
My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?
Forgive Me, Lord, for I exist
and they don't know

 pain
& pain
& pain
& for once — explain to me
swear to Yourself
why, Lord
— repeat
why, Lord
— repent
why, Lord, Have You Forsaken Me
Here
— to suffer? to strife?

there'll be no miracles while i'm alive
& i know it.

Gospel

take me on a barrel wheel too
where dandelions turn red by the sun;
where night was a fortress hiding her smile,
rose on the day burgundy took over her face.

drag me by the heart back of a car running
not only one two three or five hundred
light bulbs parting my head in two purpled
memories of the love that hurt much, but more now

show me the holy gospel of matthew left
lukewarm to repent on a land of honey and
harvey; or show me how many crucified jesuses
must I stone before the mass is over amen

teach me why must I fag away or got away
with telling she was my lover when she too went
to men, white-robed perfumed in puritan shame
only to see our war was closeted.

Father I lay on my knees searching how
to go down on the truth we will never be more than
dumb dumb waiters like beds and furniture
framed for the crime of holding hands in—

Father forgive me for I have taken him into mine
chest full of holy water drowning in the dark reports
that a shooting took places; that the dykes burst today
freeing the tears boys never cried—

Father let thy kingdom never come onto

until they can forgive trespass for ever and ever
the sight of us as angels hovering the ones we left behind
the ones in fences, furniture, fire and brimstone
the ones who lie, who hide, who fight
the ones who pray that one queer day will come
when it will be on earth as it was meant to be in heaven.