

## Jiffy

Barefoot on cold kitchen tile,  
I dip a metallic spoon into  
the jar of silky peanut butter  
while standing at the kitchen sink--  
collimated rays of sunlight  
streak across my face.

The luscious fat of the nutter-butter  
tastes like comfort--  
I smack my lips, doglike  
searching for the same languorous pleasure  
my canine counterparts find  
--by the spoonful.

But air gets stuck in the honey  
that now spreads like sickness--  
a sticky mucus membrane  
in my throat. Barefoot on cold kitchen tile  
suffocating in an overindulgence  
of our satin satisfactions.

Because a spoonful of Jiffy  
has a nostalgic aftertaste,  
like the disappointment of  
half-kept promises, the betrayal  
of a fading smile, or the sticky  
humidity of unspoken words

that hung in the air and clung  
desperately to our clothes  
all afternoon.

If I make your lunch in the summertime

I want to know what would happen  
if I cut out my own heart and kept it in a bell jar,  
pickled it with the vinegar of your acerbic lashings  
and hide it among cobwebs in the cellar to age like fine wine.

If, on an oppressive summer afternoon,  
I serve you a sandwich--warm rye  
and slices of my cold, pickled heart on a bone-white plate,

Would you call it a delicacy?  
Would you love me again?

If, when life gave us lemons,  
you cut them at their ripe core,  
drain all the pulp and juice out of their veins  
and onto my body--an open, oozing wound of your own doing--

Would you notice my blood festering?  
or call it a salve, your special remedy?

I want to know what would happen  
if, adding a spoonful of sugar,  
I strain out the pulp, ring the lemon juice out of my open sutures  
into a cold, glass cup and give it to you in the heat of July.

Would you taste the bitterness I have wept?  
or call me your sweetheart?

Darling, life gave me you--  
and with cyanide in my blood--  
I make your lunch in the summertime.

## Burn Mark

I'd like to cleave your head open.  
Rifle through your brain  
and uncover hidden things  
there, with my spindly finger tips.

I'd like to pull silver threads  
out of the sinuous steel  
wool of your soft pink soul.

You are like a child

that has been hiding a burn you got from touching the red  
hot stove even after I told you not to,  
ashamed of your lascivious desire  
to feel the pain of searing flesh.

You tell me you wanted to burn it off.  
You tell me you wanted to cut a flap --  
dog-ear your skin and pull back  
the layer of your soft pink covers

to reveal the tangled mess  
inside. You thought it would help  
unravel the manic thoughts  
and feelings that crawl beneath your skin.

But it didn't work --

The second you felt the searing pain  
And smelt your own flesh burn  
You came running back to me,  
bearing the mark of the beast.

You say it didn't work.  
You tell me that it hurts.

But tears blur eyes,  
silence drowns your cries,  
and all I hear is a burn mark.

Porcelain boy in a wooden box

you were lying there,  
asleep. cold tomb,  
stone, sepulcher.

that was your bed.  
the sheets, stiff  
white plastic,

would have squeaked  
like Styrofoam had you  
moved.

all the life drained  
from your veins,  
your face --

flawless marble,  
cold and hard.

i tried to breathe life into  
you with a kiss,  
i held my pulse against

your silent wrists,  
but my breath  
wasn't breath enough,

wasn't force-of-life enough,  
couldn't match your own  
not enough, never enough.

whispering regards,  
forceless breath,  
stepping away from

a porcelain boy in a wooden box.