

Origin Story

One morning,
during a Floridian winter,
I was born blue as the sky.
and so that is what
they called me.

Choked by the umbilical,
a weapon disguised
as a lifeline.
They cracked my bones,
as if a fortune hid inside,
to rid me of my killer
but not before it stole
my words.

I fought to take them back
but weights held tight
to my voice, burning
my throat and swelling
my tongue.

My body imprisoned
thousands of innocent
thoughts;
after many years, the restless
words began to escape
through my fingertips,
taking refuge
between the lines
of paper.

Soon,
the pressure grew lighter
on my vocal chords
as my hand
cramped and ached.
Like Sisyphus,
I had rolled words
up from my chest

over and over again
only to have them
tumble back
and land heavy
in my stomach.

This time,
they spilled from
my awaiting lips.

Summer in Brooklyn

The whirl of the archaic window unit
almost drowns out
the local homeless man
bleating for money—
a lamb in search
for milk.

I have nothing to give
so I pound back my empathy
like a shot of tequila
and continue typing.

Drenched with the odor
of falafel carts and fried chicken,
the air clings to me
like grease.

August afternoons in Brooklyn
are not halter tops
and sunbrushed skin,
San Pellegrino
and strawberry picnics,
but sweat bleeding
designer tank tops
and blistered feet
walking to the bus stop.

It's humidity sauntering
through poorly insulated
20th century walkups,
carrying one Whole Foods bag
because that's all you can afford,
and hoping the damp air
doesn't destroy it.

It's wishing central AC
wasn't just a Southern thing
and pools were more common.

It's the foul mixture
of sweat and tears
and longing
for the "New York Dream"
all the movies fed us
when we were young
and gullible.

By now,
the sky is blooming in purples and pinks
and I am still typing
and the lamb is still hungry
and the air is still thick with carbs
that pull me down
and I doze off to
the crackling city anthem
"Anything helps".

early morning thoughts on a motel balcony

outside,
shrouded in shrieking cats
and whimpering carhorns,
slumped lopsided on a smog-coloured
lawn chair, the ache of your presence
persistently pesters the nape of my neck--
like the wind in a city teasing
the buildings and loose hair.

fingers waltz with a slow
diminishing cigarette,
old lipstick leaves
Rorschach prints
for my skin to smudge
before ever deciphering;
half awake slumber
resides in the smoky motels
stacked behind my back,
fully equipped with ashtray bedsheets
and beer bottle carpets.

headlights paint
abstract expressionism
on the walls around--
Pollock pock marks
splash the window pillowing
my head;
neon knocks all other
light from my eyes,
causing stormy, red prisms
on the concrete.

dawn rises,
resembling the angry
tremor in your chest,
and the night shelters itself
under my eyes;

my sleep weary bones creak
as i stand
and inhale saccharine dew
while the neighbor birds
murmur the morning news.