

## Orange

The orange hung by a tether so thin,  
So much promise in its rough, orange skin.  
Imagined the sweet, succulent flesh on your tongue,  
Quenching your needy thirst for desire, sweetness, and acidity all in one.  
The bruise was the problem,  
On the opposite side from where it hung,  
Obscured from view,  
Away from you.  
In the breeze it swayed,  
A little too virulent was the sway,  
So you looked away.  
It fell, with a plop and a splat,  
At your feet,  
Sweet liquid glistening your legs,  
Revealing its dark innards.

## **Mom's Prayer**

**Our father, who art in Heaven,**

Her eyes follow his cracked lips that recite

**Hallowed be thy name**

Her name an empty nameless pit in her own mind

**Thy kingdom come**

Kingdom better come soon to end her suffering

**Thy will be done**

How could this brittle, brutal end be anyone's will?

**On earth as it is in heaven,**

Let us hope not

**Give us this day our daily bread**

I want no slice of that

**Forgive us our debts**

Endless string of pearly, emotional debts

**As we forgive our debtors**

Is God her debtor?

**And lead us not into temptation**

Because all those foregone temptations would have saved her?

**But deliver us from evil**

And all its sinful trappings

**For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever**

So much power, so much needless suffering

**Amen**

Amen to that

## **Messy**

Love is indeterminably messy  
What writer hasn't messed with it?  
Spun it dirty in their melancholy hands  
Spread it greedily to the vacant page  
Smeary, dark, and pleasingly wet  
Where it reluctantly dried  
Caked and flaked  
Like mud, only lonelier

## **Losing**

A lifetime of worry  
Melted into a momentary phone call  
Your voice, a high pitched panic  
How do I write a check?  
Strength and tenacity slipping with the ink  
Into oblivion  
The second call, days, weeks later  
How do I dial a phone?  
And your voice  
In little quivering bits  
Left your mouth  
Fell into the abyss of loss  
Swallowed up by the darkness of your eyes  
It rested there  
Hardened by blame

## **Ruins**

Swathed  
In safe-haven warmth  
Untangled my veins  
Like tugging on a slip-knot  
With hazel eyes  
Swam the moat  
Circumnavigated heavy doors  
Unearthed ancient terracotta  
Ruins  
The rush in my ears  
I barely heard the knock  
On massive double doors  
Of my sanctuary  
I answered dark doubt  
Like a beggar's toothless grin  
Settled in  
With its black, gaping holes  
Slithering tongue bulging  
Between yellowed teeth  
With each word formed by supple lips  
I loved to kiss  
I tumbled through the darkness  
The stars a laser-like blur on the descent  
Saltwater like cement, my greeter  
Flattened  
Floundered  
Found  
A tangible tree  
To accommodate me  
Wrangled away from the grin  
The sin  
The damaged remains  
Panic chasing her beyond your reach