

i. for the wild sky

the black ice of july
we feel the weight of the water
heavy lid, when you forget how to pour

i remember when we laid beneath you
vessels for your tears
soaking in every last sorrow

the morning of relief
the light fools us
the girls i know forget they are witches

as human as the acceptance of every feeling as truth
they have fallen into a deep and fearful sleep
and i am only an earth woman,

awakened by a bird in the night

ii. stranger flesh

in the dazed subterfuge of a small letter
i said it all and left it tattered
in the bottom of an open case
that used to hold my roller skates

through the softness of my cashmere sweater
i felt your will, your wooden bones
fold to form a chest i remember with such tactile clarity

put on your mittens:
open the chest
put on your mittens and she'll do the rest

now a wintered, adulterated soak
with tonight's perigee i find no penetration
and with no purity left to me
a heart's capacity seems carnal

i try to seduce the moon

they'll always get so close to you
unhorse yourself and feed the corpse to the lake
for it this flesh is mine,
it's still yours i crave
i don't trust this freedom anyway

all in a day's deceit
we wait for the moon to kiss the silt
as if we'll be able to see
as if we'll be able to feel

iii. sixteen

i remember the way it felt to pour red, salty wine down my throat
i can still feel the bottle clasped tightly, like a swan's neck, in my small fist

i am pushing my way through a crowd of sweaty devils
i am fearless

i am lying on a mattress in a minivan
on my back

mini-skirt and liquid-eyeliner
lips pouted over a paper joint

smoke caressing the inside of my hot, red mouth
i like the way you taste when i won't remember
sneaking out of a moldy cot at dawn
biking away into the hot summer day
grinding, head-splitting light--- i will never talk to you again

i let you inside me, now leave

i remember the way it felt to fall in love
like being saved
i can still feel the carpet beneath me, tears streaming right off of my face
the realization that i am so alone and so is everybody else

to be so drunk and sad and stoned and fucked
and sure, that this is the only truth there is

iv. wedlock

he says things don't have to be so heavy that you can't carry them
he says a lot of things
he says every step doesn't have to have a ten foot shadow

he pulls the secret door from its hinges; wailing

i am not a person again, curled in a ball on the sliding bed
i had only just gotten out of it

his fist is getting heavier and the room is filling with water slowly, but surely

is this what a flood is like? i have never drowned

his body is hurling into the sliding bed
his hands clenched tight around the sheets and the featherbed-- he pulls with all his force
it doesn't go far

i am not a person again, curled in a ball on the sliding bed
i had only just gotten out of it

now
we are both crying and folding laundry and you are sorry but not really
i am sitting next to you but we are not close

i am back where i started: the secret room i always find, the plain, white walls with howling
wind through clacking shutters-----

i walk towards the window, my hair is framing my face like an angel: yellow light
a pool with palm trees (are they real?)

i walk towards the window, my hair blowing in the wind
or is it the effect of an industrial strength fan?

white light

the ocean (is it real?)

and then it is all gone. everything disappears / fades to white

you have a body again and it is heavy and clogged and aching and completely sunk into a
cloud?

a sliding bed
are you really free? you are alone as you shift into consciousness, but you hear
your company downstairs
you can stare at the ceiling or hear the rain on the roof and if you could turn your

head, if you weren't so stuck to the sliding bed, if you weren't so weak

you could see the pockets of moss on the roof

was it really raining?

it is impossible to know. you are tempted to say it is always raining. you are more careful about what you say now that you have learned from the best

now that you have felt something are you really free?

now that you know he is counting and you are counting

and the number seems small to him

and the number seems big to you

sometimes you feel like you are drowning or at least that's what you imagine--- you have never drowned

are you really free?

you close your eyes, the morning light is harsh and your body is heavy: uncontrollable

like a drive-in movie

you are sitting in a dark car

the windows are glued shut

there is no sound

but the movie is playing and you can't help but watch, your eyes are peeled. you have a feeling a the same thing is playing over and over again, but you haven't been there long

you are the star, your eyes are peeled

you sitting on a closed toilet in a spinning bathroom head in hands, count the tiles---- you lift your head out of your hands and the motion makes you sick vomit

but you have never been to a drive-in movie, you can't even drive

you are not a person yet

you want something i don't have,

i lift my head out of my hands, the motion makes me sick vomit

are you really free?

he says things don't have to be so heavy you can't carry them

he says a lot of things

he says every step doesn't have to have a ten foot shadow

he says he is sorry but not really

i said i wanted the passion to make me sick i said that

v. well

you always wanting to be amazed by simplicity

i found a pile of dirt where it belongs
i am a perpetual, overcomplicated drift
the moment my lips take to the wine, i so easily forget
the tree branch i can be

a well for the water
you lift out of me