

Persephone, 2017

Sometimes, you don't see the bars.
You see the phases of the moon.
And it pulls you like an ocean
because you are still--mostly water.

Sometimes, you don't see the water.
You see the yolk yellow sun hatching
across the surface, and you swim to it
because it's cold--in the dark.

Sometimes, you don't see the dark.
You see the golden lanterns waving.
Calling you like the future
because somewhere inside you--it's springtime.

Everything is Alive

My friends worry about me in the fire.
How is the air? What is the particulate count?
Here is a website.
Someone has started a Go Fund Me.
My friends worry that I am lost.
Check in. We're worried.
I have a cell phone
but the towers are gone
and I am crunching through brittle
beds of pine needles
my skin is bubbling
and everything is alive
around me
everywhere burning
I know where my house is
body memory
leads me
through this fog
smoke cutting my lungs
my eyes sting from little flashes
of dry brush
and what was true
my mouth crackles
there is a storm in here
fire creates its own
weather
I am a storm.
I am a fire.
I am a hazard.
I am dry brush.

That is all they will know
of me.

Superheros at the Drive In

We sit watching the big screen under the fattest moon
Eating popcorn like it was our first meal in a 100 days
Wrapped in our cocoon of metal and machine
Separated from all the little dramas and comedies
of strangers fucking and fighting around us
with their windows open, weed drifting in
and I am happy
that you are happy
we have no time for nostalgia
that seems to be the theme of movies these days
urgent hero stories where we must save the world
battling every day against the ticking clock
saving women, saving children
saving kittens in trees
saving trees
theoretically saving myself
and all this saving makes me weary
as I grab your hand to fly away and it drops.

For the Rose Who Blooms
In Spite of Me

I'm sorry.
I took you for my wife
and then ignored you after
that spectacle you made
of yourself with those
big blousy blooms
and pale petals
falling apart whenever
some hand happens to
touch you.

I'm sorry.
I should have just
buried my nose into
you and inhaled every
last molecule that
describes you
keeping all that DNA
for myself
so I could remember
when we are both
covered in thorns.

I'm sorry
I punished you
I cut you
I fed you only water
for three days
with not even an aspirin
and then I wilted.
What a terrible lover I am.
What a terrible flower you are.
But I would take you again
for my wife.

Flight Patterns

Under the supermoon
jumbo jets line up and
hang like summer fireflies
while I have circled LAX
a thousand miles
tonight
with flowers
I kept for myself
as I drove home
past the triple x live nude girls
past the grimy oil refinery
past the dark off ramp home
I nearly always miss
you, me
steering between
departure and arrival
looking for a runway

Prayers and Other Lies
for Petra's mother

your candles to the virgin
are made of wax
and burn
nothing
stop
nothing
bring nothing
fake magic
hope will not
bring back a child
you could have everyone
light a candle
but your child would still
have died
beaten
bleeding inside
your husband disappeared
your angels making
excuses for god
and you believe them
because who would
let such a thing
happen
not you
not a mother
no
so you light a
wick of possibility
to chase away
the devil
and your guilt

Things

Sometimes it feels like
all I am doing is managing data.
All night I have been cleaning out my Dropbox
which took as long as it would take me to
organize my garage
but my garage is analog
muscle piled up behind inertia.
Me. Obsolescence.

A professor told me digital is not real
just electrical bits of code. Nothing
you could hold
like my mother's old camisole
tucked away in a bottom drawer
or my unworn clothes in bags for
a garage sale.

Things.

What is the digital equivalent of a thing
if logic and function give names to
every thing?
There's this thing in my garage.
This thing I hid
in my drawer.
This thing I remember about your face when we first met.
This thing I remember when I saw you across the gallery.
Talking about things to someone I thought must be a
lover but you looked at everyone
like they were a lover.
Your head tilting, studying them
from a different angle. So
so intimate. Touching. Laughing.
How could I know that there was some
thing in me that was different to you?
A chemistry. An unseeable,
out-of-the visible spectrum
illogical spark.
It was *that* thing.

But that is so digital
being in our thoughts.
So in our head.
So many other people around but
isolated in this fascination

of electrical impulses
of digital desire
of static and disruption
of technology erupting from our
pores. Pheromones.
Yes, I desired you.
I still do. As I sit
working late in my office
the white noise of memories
fluttering through.

The Art of Doing Nothing

Take a ride up the wild coast
and throw your cell phone
in the ocean past the lighthouse.
Stop in Big Sur at a book store
in a grove of red woods.
Take a book from the free shelf
and find a hammock outside
and let the trees read to you
the banana slugs cover
you and chew every page.
Fall asleep for a hundred years
near a stream and let it wash
the city off of you and hone you
into a smooth and perfect stone.

The book store manager says
nothing ever happens here.