

## Harmony Button

### Dog

I overheard  
lift here & lips.  
Tit for tat,  
teeth for boot tips –

eyelashes for browsing

& peroxide  
(dab dab) browning  
at the eye  
& growling

moonshine. This is

egg based; a lug  
at the muzzle & his  
ugly mug  
(sin on a stick) –

shaken and win-win.

## A Visitor

Came by for tea today.  
We all gathered 'round outside,  
chins on window sills.

*– it's all held up with thumb tacks,*  
she said, waving all her hands.

Instead of nodding to say yes  
there have been thumb tacks,  
yes to snake oil and yes, you do need me,  
he pulled wads of chalk out of his pockets.

Nubbins. Fingers  
to the bone.

*Go ahead then –*  
go ahead and rub *it in*.

Chalk like sugar cubes  
melted in their mugs.

Outside, all us kids decided  
this was gross. Argued  
if she caught us if

*Avert your eyes,*  
she'd say. Or else,  
*Please mind your bees.*

Just then, a hornet tapped its heavy ass  
against the inside of her window  
and \*zimp\* like that  
he pinched the life right out of it.

*Did you see? Did you see that?*  
We gloated and weaved.

Inside, she was looking sad,  
so we wandered off, picking  
the dirt from our wings.

## Tea, Midvale

I.

and there were pumpkin pies  
bite sized, with dollops  
of whipped cream on top

and chunks of avocado  
sweet tomato  
rich cheeses and chutneys  
glass jars with small spoons

and there were women there, with furniture  
and pictures of her family all around

and I was warmer there  
with furniture  
and other warming women all around

and we passed hours there  
with the mountains purpling  
and the coffee pouring  
and the tea cups matching  
and my knees relaxing  
face and feet relaxing –

This was good. I

                               craving  
days like these.

then,                  leaving, I  
                               still needing  
love, the way you love  
when you are lonely and  
your car groans in the morning,  
smells like burning and your  
brother –  
home only for funerals  
                               your father's mother –

and spiders  
in a saucepan  
morning wet and  
frozen garden –

I.

Thought I was  
uncommon. Thought I was

another  
woman

these things come to those who –

*I bake pies, and coffee cake.  
I tie twine in bracelets, cut the bark  
and steep the tea bags twice.*

I *step lightly*  
am frowning now  
the lip thrust that you love

and holding things between

*...break a tooth like that,*  
along with  
chewing ice cubes. Reckless

and indifferent. And you.

You, who I called tulip  
(you said *tulip?!  
you said, and I*)

Yes, or Buster,  
*Easy, killer*  
makes me glower,  
glow, a ruddy hollow  
pleasure foaled,

*like new born sheep  
they fell among their curdled birth  
in bloody chunks, gut-hot ricotta,* I –

That's so gross,  
he interrupted. Hey. I said,

I'm sorry. It was what I

see here. Now.

A diplomat. I have become so very

emotionally intelligent. Aware.

Capable of making truly

rational

decisions.

I can say,

*I'm not really mad about the sheep,*

*darling,*

*I'm upset because it makes me feel like*

shattered

shatters. Shattering.

Perhaps this needs explaining.

Like that time when we

in front of all those open windows

even when I

and you

with your arm and

glass fell on the floor and

shattering

you grabbed me so I wouldn't hurt my and and –

*go to bed, baby*

you said and I

believed you, not because

I *was* but

you *said* I was. You said,

III.

, *baby*.

You said. And I –

You were so  
certain in this. I heard  
sweeping coming from the kitchen.  
I knew.  
Dutiful. And did you darling cut your feet?

## **A Basic Guide to Science**

Science is better than math because  
you can be Luxie Sanford's lab partner  
if everybody else is absent.

The teachers can wear jeans  
and wipe hands on them, while  
English and History are all khakis and skirt.

What other classroom has a sink  
and dead things and  
is cold and smells like creek bed all the time?

One time I reached for an icepack  
and cracked a frozen rat. Science  
can be gross.

Still, it weighs me. Science  
is a bitch. Luxie, please don't  
laugh. You're ruining

the experiment. Calling it 'science'  
is just another way to say  
it's not my fault



## His Jesus Isn't Anybody's Jesus

I read and loved a poet.  
He's a Christian  
but I loved him anyway.

He never said –  
and anyway, his Jesus  
isn't anybody's Jesus.

At what point can a girl  
buy a fella underthings?  
They're silk ones so  
I did it anyway.

The poet man is dying.  
Who says I can't say  
*silken things*  
next to death and Jesus?

Sex death Jesus. There.

By now we have hopscotched  
up and down the only stairs I know.

Ambrosia  
purple up at midnight –  
exhalation:

*lessen*

*lesson*

*listen –*

Sex death Jesus.  
I clap my hands and laugh  
delight!