

Úna Nolan

## Her

The first time we met you were quiet  
You stood back from the crowd, a small smile on your lips that withheld your words  
But I could see a world in your eyes  
(Suppressing, Oppressing, entirely impressing)  
A universe of stars around your irises  
Sheltered by the pink ornamentation on your eyelids

The next time I saw you  
You were with her  
We had talked since, our phones creating a slipway, pathway, (hideaway?)  
Between our minds  
A shortcut between our secrets  
She held your sleeve, but not your hand  
And my fingers ached to intertwine with yours  
Like roses in a garden

And then you were drunk, wasted, gone  
But you tasted like sunshine  
And it filled me to the brim with yellow smiles  
My fingers tangling in your hair  
My knees forgetting gravity

There have been meetings since  
Mistakes in a coffee shop  
(Mistakes- your word, not mine)  
And when I saw you after  
Your lips smothered, covered, being discovered by others  
Who weren't mine  
You seemed less somehow  
Smaller, no taller, as if in withdrawal

The nerves on my skin were still electric  
The negativity of my atoms aching for your protons to flow across them  
But the socket in my chest was dying  
The plug pulled, the roses withering  
For you are hers  
And although I am just a flower  
And you are a garden

I will not feel these weeds

## **The Woman**

I wish to tell you of a woman  
Surrounded in a haze  
Who wandered into the supermarket at midday  
With her pyjamas hanging loosely around her  
A dull grey that reflected her hair  
The skin swollen round her eyes, holding the colour  
Of an angry sunset-  
But the look of a deep ocean  
Filled with things that no one quite knows about  
Secrets that are wild as the current, aching to spill  
Forward and yet pulling back each time they  
Slipped towards the bay  
And I wondered at her hands as they grasped  
Tins of beans from the shelf, to her arms  
No basket for her trembling fingers  
Just an invisible wind that kept them shivering  
Like autumn leaves hanging from bare branches  
I thought that maybe someone would pray for her  
And her cracked lips that mouth words behind understanding  
As she shuffles between the shelves  
Alone

## **Yellow**

Yellow has always been my favourite colour  
Yellow is the colour of the sunshine  
That illuminates the shape of your skin  
In the mornings  
Reflecting each freckle, each line, each hair back to me  
And showing me the shades of green in your eyes  
That sparkles in the rays of light  
Each time you move your head  
And catches my hand as it reaches for yours  
Dancing on my fingertips as they run through  
Your silky hair that always  
Reminds me of a dying flame

It was the colour of my Granny's kitchen  
Where I used to sit at her dining table and swing my legs  
That did not quite reach the ground  
She would make me pancakes  
And the smell would fill the air  
And she would hum softly as I  
Provided a stream of thought to be spoken aloud  
And when the stack was placed in front of me  
Covered in yellow butter, and yellow lemon  
I would smile a gap-toothed smile  
And feel the yellow in my soul