

Lindsay Rockwell

Spectacular— To Be Made From Marrow

To love
the burning world

& susurrations
of aspens

& how sun startles
black bottomed clouds

then sky becomes
a painting—

such kindness
catches my breath off-guard

& lonely too
sometimes I lie face up

in open water
for hours

& count
my breath

& lose my skin
& as I reach for air

I see
 here & there

a dragonfly
 flit

& then
 I only wish

I didn't feel
 so awkward

& love
 the burning world so much

that now
 I lie face down

in open water
 counting

how many
 times my

breath stops

Soft Your Drum

Stay.

My lips and tongue
want your torso
liquid—unsecured.
Clamor to me. Irreverent
on all fours. Animal.
Feel earth. Ground is
minefield and halcyon
too. Love—my field
of quartz may cut
though I promise gently
opens. Drink. Here
is a spoon, laced
to it a ladle. Here
is hematite to wreath
your throat. Do not
come too close. Rhythm
sit. Soft your drum.
Call my name. And I
call yours. Let us drip
in waiting. Not arriving
not yet having left.

I Imagine the Innermost Thoughts of My Cancer Patient

*My chemotherapy drips
steady slow
it's red
the color of mercy*

*I could make this place
beautiful, right?*

*unbag the bodies—
tie them with
pretty bows offer incense
on my knees even though*

*death arrives
in freight trains
& for every lover
there is a moth adoring flame*

*I see there are no gods
slamming the firmament shut no—
they curtsy at the gate
Athena in her red dress
carries swords
between her teeth & I think*

*for every stone thrown
at a woman buried
to her neck in dirt
there is a prayer wheel
writing on the wind*

*my chemotherapy drips
steady slow
it's red
my setting sun*

Sentience

The word was born breathless
a tuft of silt & sorrow

the word was born fierce
green & screaming

wears high heels taffeta a red dress
shimmering is the stuff of bees & finches

ecstatic din of flight the word
is careful delicate a body plundered

too many times words are imperfect
Vs of geese & the boom of bullets

as they're blown out of the sky
words are born gates

gardens of boats stars & mud
ravens & swans circling

as the slow tangle of dawn
tender & wild swings in the fields

& the word is scent heat & jasmine that calls
& calls to fox & deer who still

their tread turn their heads as the small
miracle of morning matters inside them

Flood

*Odd, for an apocalypse
to announce itself with such bounty.
Kaveh Akbar*

& of course, it's beautiful
lament
twilight
how flood's wake
alters silt & fist forever

the belfry's silence
rings us
broken

a woman cups
her baby's face
& begins
to speak in tongues

beyond my window
boats bleed
in waves
& of course

I'm afraid, so many bodies
lost at sea
unattended
they spiral

no matter the misery
here's a match
light me I say

my knees buckle
 beneath blades
 of light crisscrossing above my head & the storm
 switchbacks like my lover's wrist wanting
 & not wanting to be unchained from the hull

mute
 beauty empties itself into itself