

Anastasia Walker

THE HOLE

Roxsana está muerta
a los 33 años
she walked over a thousand miles
cuz she feared home
more than liberty's fierce riddle
& was welcomed
as the wretched refuse
they said she was
iced in the hole
shackled, starved, surveilled
then erased
from the video
cuz her captors were jealous
of their days & nights together
gutting her for
all their garbage they dumped y por
que ella vino y dijo *Estoy*
aquí

THE GIRL WITH EYES OF THE SEA

Her eyes were not the blue of the sky or
Brown of the earth but the furtive gray-
Blue-green of the sea, like the light
Off its ripples never fixed but
Skipping from one to the next
To the next and back and this girl
With eyes of the sea couldn't see
Herself in the usual places—
Mirrors or windows, TV or the faces
Of people she passed who troubled to look
And laugh or sneer: the girl with
The sea's eyes saw her face only
In the shimmering moon on the slumbering bay,
Felt herself in those hushed stoic depths
Drifting past our shores on their way
From wish to wish.

LOVE SONG (AVERSION)

Did they, child, talk yet again
about the One who loves you more than
your mama and daddy, except when
you do what's unlovable
even for It (or was it them)? Did
the steely glint in those
avuncular eyes as they
laid their hands on
the straps that secured you,
praising that fierce idol whose
name sounded all
wrong on their tongues, tell
you this wasn't about
Love? And did you
glimpse the something
quivering and cruel in
the cold stagnant pools of
their hearts as they put
that clamp on your balls
and turned up the juice?

ACE'S ARMS

say Ace loves
their autistic little bro
(the movie tatt)
& life – see that

big black ; on their wrist
among the cuts & burns right
where the veins are thickest?

ask where can Ace go &
what the fuck's one fragile kid
whose family's too
consumed with survival to know?

say love won't
save Ace, please don't
touch them, please it's
they, them, dark
silence cuts, don't
say you care then
leave, the dark
won't leave them, won't
you stay?

ask where's the soft green plot
for the fragile among
the falcons & maggots?

know Ace loves
to laugh – I heard
them, smiled, said *Until*
there's nothing, there's hope

LOVE SONG (DAD)

I can't flush this love-borne malaise
Desolating me like some B
Noir on endless repeat: you
Backlit, sprawled on the bar
Sucking the old stories dry from
Memory's withered teat, or guiding
Your rusted out Caddy to
That old makeout spot
To chase your crimes with
The bourbon stashed in the trunk
A two hour \$4 absolution
In oblivion's sloppy embrace –
The burden of those years
Hating myself for all that
Didn't please you and all the
Light I'm left, you sullen
Silent ghost, is in my mirror?

DANCING WITH NICKY

pulling, pulling me, me
sad moon with my dead dust
rings and all the silent lightless
light years adrift, those eyes pulling
me to your orbit, spirals
tighter as your eyelids slide
into their sleepy embrace and
dropping through my
own fierce air burns
up the freak, a hole in
the clouds, dizzy green
worlds, lips
touch, part
waltzing butterflies

“YOU HAVE TWO SONS”

For Kelly and Kyle

those blue pink white stripes strange &
the words at first opaque – *You have*
two sons – but the quiet, frightened
plea in that look you’d seen
so often, the brows’ arch this
time a veil was rent gifting his
crazy, harrowing, magical
Yes