

Natalie Hayes

I announce hibernation as I pull myself out of the ground & wonder when all of this filth will finally fall off of me

In so far as the eye can see it's just
me & the 18 wheelers tonight & they know best (that I turn back into myself after winter)
crashing head-first back into what it means to be moving, I'm learning to walk in such a way that
my feet will never touch the ground (I have wings & they are made out of mud flaps) or dirt in
the sense of rooted, in the sense of wet soil stuck under fingernails, in the sense of half a rubber
tire as omen, in the sense of steering in the sense of hands clasped (in prayer). I think
it's hardest to die in the springtime.

I think shallow breathing will be the death of me
& I only know how to write poems in the dark
(light) house pointed upwards, a straight shot
to the north star/what I've decided is the north star tonight & there will be a meteor shower on
my birthday & I wonder if something will fling itself from the sky & into my stomach & knock me
over with the sound of a 2nd decade (while I recall, all at once, that a professor told me not to
age myself in my work/that my poems will be tainted by the fact that I'm not forty yet) but I
am trying my best to be upfront with you—on that note,
I feel the need to inform you that I am so in love with the sky—I just want you to say something
for once—tell me how you stretch so far
and yet I can't touch you—I catch myself (screaming) & slow to a stop. Again,
it's hardest to die in the springtime.

my mother straps her father's ashes into the passenger seat of her car and drives to where they can watch the planes

so that she might, as turbine engine : one : on either end of the cockpit : 1 : cry herself into turbulence, : 2 : cup her hands over her ears like a pair of pilot's headphones : except for that she has nothing she wants to say into the receiver : and : 3 : move : on : she asks her memory of him : is it safer to be : 1 : seat-belted or : 2 : sitting above the wing : he always said that was the safest seat : one day : she will know what it feels like : to sink into the spaces she's made for herself : big black holes with : this on one and and : that on the other : i : i am afraid it will be : too : small for the : three : of us

THANK YOU

Water from the other end of the lake won't help
the silty itch in the back of your throat
but it's worth a shot
so I say keep on drinking.

One day
I'll become my own mountain,
and another day
I'll erode myself into the basin
of some neighbor who will
(another day)
spit me back into orogenesis.
That time, I'll hope for ocean.
I'll hope that saltwater will burn
away at all of my orifices, and I promise
to say *thank you* when I notice the scars.

i will have a son + name him "hudson"

i learned that if hydrogen peroxide sits out in the sun long
enough, it turns into water. i think that
perhaps this is more useful than water to wine
because wine won't eat away at my earwax
in the same way.

(this is an unfounded claim, an assumption if anything, as i'
m unsure of what might happen if i poured wine into my ea
rs. anyways) i'm lying in bed + hydrogen peroxide is bubblin
g through the trails that lead to my brain, thinking about the
EXERCISE IN SELF_HYPNOSIS my therapist taught me,
she said *think about somewhere you'd like to be + where is that place*
? + i told her there's a big hill back home + it bleeds into the
hudson river + in this brain i am sitting there on a big blan
ket with a blunt. it smells like summer + maybe i'll walk do
wn to the wet where i can swimmmmm, soft water against s
kin feels natural like sweat; hudson,
are you from my pores?
or i from yours?