

Arvening

A boy enters quiet, and his tiny shock to catch
a dropped face as sainted she stands
at the suffering sink, sunk in unmoored light

his Mother no more but a beast unawares
pastured in night, caught asleep
in an elsewhere tethered life. Tear trek dried

through floured cheek, onion hands to apron
thighs, she lost and profound in this arvening
glow, this orange-pink haloing a yard

overgrown, this light brimming eye and spilling
the lip of a kitchen window, bathing a face
sifted to its resting place, a face unmade

for hide or show, ripened to windfall,
the stippled sweetness and sadness
of a patient mango.

Amygdala hijack

Silverback stride delight neon lime road bike
I can't ride outside, the cars croak too loud, the magpies swoop too low
in our little cul de sac
Wait till Ba gets home, but he says it's too dark to practice now
And tucks himself back behind the wheel
I can sleep anywhere except on a bed, he laughs
Fishing boats, sputtering sedans, late buses, full trains, paper planes
Symptoms include fatigue, uneasiness, dizziness and vomiting
If he stays still for too long, the faster and further
away
he is to who he was,
the better.
And so, I fold him into a frog like he taught me all those centuries ago
I tuck him into our letterbox where he can finally sleep
With no return address

I waddle back and forth under the shrinking carport
Throwing bang snap poppers at a head of weeds crowning out a
Split on the concrete patio
Slow down. Always have one foot on the ground
Our backyard is as big as a baby's thumb, but I go fast until I can't stop and
Tug the tire out the wall of our granny flat
To find a hole in space and time that I'm sure wasn't there before
I poke my head through the gash and watch my mum
Hang a husk of my body on the rotary line
my arms and legs flail as she beats me with a tennis racket
I wheel the holy trinity of bins to cover it up

And beg to lie with you on the mesh hammock
I got here first! Wait your turn!
I fan away your tears with a palm leaf

And rock you back

You are eleven, youngest of eleven, lucky last

Nothing to eat but cassava,

even now you miss the taste of cyanide

I rock you forth

You are seventy seven, in bed by seven,

starving for sounds of me,

I try to catch you in the moment, as you are now

Before your tattooed brows fade green, before your brittle hands dry out, before you forget who you are

I tangle myself to you

We are bound

not by the red thread of destiny

pinkies

but connected by the tapeworm of fate

belly buttons

When you become a mum, you'll understand

Next time

aroundnuora

I'll make sure

You're my daughter

So I can finally understand.

The Moon, Domesticated

Your body is a sheet on clothesline
in south wind – touched
on one side only, one side
completely.

Let its other surface be
the dark side of the moon
rising orange above mine-glow
over the estuary. Untouchable,
but not cold as we expect
dark things to be – no,
burning and blistering
without atmosphere to protect
from horizon-crossed sun.

Your body pends discovery
by an astronaut who will not know
how to speak what has been found.

And will turn to writing it, this
failed act of speech.

Your body waits to be caressed

by starstruck boots, then
taken shaken folded
upon a bed.
Where a window opens
to the south wind of creation,
and the moon side
has its turn in the breeze.