

Half Poems
by Ella Harmon

Youth:

there was a time when experience rose and fell before me, always a foot or two away.

distant enough to watch with placid amusement through the veil of a knowing (unknowing) smile.

pacified by the continuous tide of change, fraught fragments bobbed along, bound together by the fluid course of my being.

succession was world-unity.

I, in my timid raft, believed myself the river.

Womb:

a wheel bent just so that when ridden, it traces a circle which meets its outset askew, missing the landmark each time

dear mother, a bluebird hand painted on a dresser drawer

a heart so inclined towards guilt, even cool visitors are ripped into orbit.

Morning:

I no longer wish to dwell in the bliss of a green morning.

slow drips and kettle rust.

history is built backwards.

we must rush into day, impelled by boiling veins.

The temple made me cry:

wooden carvings of red, gold, and copper green recede into darkness,
shark's teeth.

with the tension of a magnet prepared to rip a cold hunk of steel, so my heart was pulled.

above, a small bell tickled by the wind echoes through the curve of the valley.
delicately far from terra firma, bound by a single chain.

the air felt clean, though tainted with devotion. tears sprung for no one.

the mere shadow of a death wish learned in its honest form.

City bus:

disgust rises from me like steam from the asphalt. this is what has become of the once
wellspring of joy that rose from my sternum, whose dew dotted pale lashes, blurring the world
into glittering oblivion.

how to return to such youthful intensity with clear eyes.

Row:

words are but water for the poet's paddle.

he glides upon their shiny surface, casting soft, defiant ripples upon the low world of reason.

a yearning for the dissolution of difference which upholds all things.

Run:

until the wind has torn all flesh from bone.

perhaps then, the pulsating emptiness, whose muffled cry vibrates a cage of cold ribs,
could release herself

into the warm abyss for which she rings

with no ducts to secrete mourning

no knuckles to clamp white

no esophagus to rip bile

rended from ligament

liberated of convolution

may soul soar forth from clean pile

oh, calm collapsed form

sink softly into the earth

from which, against all will,

you so violently sprung

Hyperion:

limp fragments of life shed from a pen.

we divide great chords of mourning into ever ascending song.

Airplane 2:

the clouds below are static now. we pretend we are too.

suspended in stillness. violence tucks itself away.

the futures have ceased their prodding

each water droplet has its place.

wings rest sturdy as a shelf.

Rilke:

fragments come kinder than tangents.
when a word pokes itself into my flesh, it comes with little padding.
a sentence just ling enough to swish around the mouth,
for the tongue to twist tirelessly
until it lingers with the certainty of sore muscle.

Wind:

a cold heart sticks to the seams of new trousers.
mine pounds like an animal in the next room.
her voice rains in as if through a window. I encounter every third word:
cause... impossibility... technique... nature... end... impossibility... end.

sobbing is a stranger who echoes through the night of a distant skull.
I am no longer a religious man. to deny this world is delusion.
but to thrust new being through its wretched walls is worse.

the storm will soon quiet. The next blows quickly behind.
I will take refuge in the wind chimes.
let them wash over me like water. ceasing each clot. rinsing active rot.

Equipment room:

the bone beneath the gash vibrates.
pale skin raked up around the edges of a white trough.
the fine work of a snow plow.
experience tells you it won't be long before the trench fills with your least-favorite liquid.
in the space of a blink, you flash to a floor-level view of your grandfather's tan, black, and
maroon woven rug on the floor of a retirement home in florida.
you do the wash, band aid, neosporin business.
the hand is viewable once again.

Unheimlich:

eyelids open. everything is yonic beneath the lingering gaze:

the seam between pressed knuckles. the knotting of tree trunks.
the tight pleats of a tufted couch. the rigid oval of a crushed bottle cap.

none yield to the touch the way a yearning heart may hope.

alluringly familiar, stubbornly opaque.

the way soft flesh slopes with the drag of a finger —

a once-home dislocated.