

Half Poems

by Ella Harmon

Taken from across time.

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

Mother:

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.

Unheimlich:

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.
Alluringly familiar, yet stubbornly opaque. A once-home dislocated.

None of these objects yield to the touch the way a yearning heart hopes.
The way soft flesh slopes with the drag of a finger —

Rise:

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.

Busan:

Wood carvings of crimson, gold, and copper-green recede into darkness: a shelter of sharks' 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 echoed 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.

Equipment Run:

The bone beneath the gash vibrates.

Pale skin raked up along the edges of a white trough.

The fine work of a snowplow.

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.

Hyperion:

Limp fragments of life shed from a pen.

We divide great chords of mourning into ever-ascending song.

Airplane:

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 droplet has its place.

Wings rest sturdy as a shelf.

Run:

Until the wind has torn all flesh from bone.

Until the pulsating emptiness, whose muffled cry vibrates a cage of cold ribs can release herself.

Into the warm abyss for which she rings.

Rended from ligament.

Liberated of convulsion.

With no knuckles to clamp white.

No ducts to secrete mourning.

Oh, calm collapsed form.

Sink softly into the Earth,

From which, against all will,

You so forcefully sprung.

Where were we?

Tongues twists tirelessly. Unfinished until the words linger with the certainty of sore muscle.

The air is thick with affect. It seems you've lost yours. Disgust rises from you like steam from the asphalt.

This is what has become of the once wellspring of joy that rose from your sternum;

Whose dew dotted pale lashes, blurring the world into glittering oblivion.

How to return to such youthful intensity with the shrewd stare of clean-wiped eyes...

Womb:

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...

My sobbing is a stranger who echoes through the night of a distant skull.

To deny this world is delusion. To thrust new being through its wretched walls seems worse.

The storm will soon quiet. The next blows quickly behind.

I will take refuge in the wind chimes. Wash my blood in their flowing multitudes. Cleansing each clot.

Rinsing active rot.