

5 little boxes

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5 little boxes

Empty.

1.

When I step in closer to your body, braiding you into myself, your skin melting dry, you don't tell me of places or of houses, of living closer to who you are- our silence smoothes us over into each other and makes us grown. What I want is to have you, the distance born out of us and left there. What you want I see, making yourself still to see. What I inherited from you was myself, you said long ago.

You take the bowl and show me how. You walk ahead and show me how. Your body sinks in the water, telling me this is how you do it, try it. If your skin burns in the sun, that tells me how not to do it. When you wrap yourself in wool, your body hidden and soft under them, I imagine myself doing the same and it feels good in my own- I run downstairs and place myself under the tree. When you don't speak, when you don't scream, I take it that that's how you're supposed to do it. I learn from the humming in your throat that that's how you move yourself closer to land rather than them. We see each other live, I make your hand show me my face and then yours, are they so distant? I ask you how to make him warmer, more comfortable, how to make him into the garden outside, and I also ask you why sometimes the same thing, this house, feels so different, myself inching closer or farther depending on the weight told by the weather that day. For instance: one day we prolonged our being outside and the expectation of going in to make ourselves ready to go out made me feel the stones' heat coming from underneath my feet

as if it were ourselves opening the eyes to the decreasing light,
time boring us sharper.

You use the bathroom and I follow you to see how, or perhaps because
it's better to be with you than without. You pull me towards you, in
front of you, you unroll two sheets of toilet paper and you wrap
them around my neck, you lift a hand mirror in front of it and you
let me see the thin vibration that shows through the paper. You look
over the window sill and see only sky. You tell me to open the
window, you tell me to sit next to you. Air rushes in and moves
towels and knocks down bottles. Close your eyes. I don't because I
want to see her.

You go around making things ready but you forget to tell me. I say
I'm excited about the future and that seems to fall flat. I go
outside to play and am scared of the pleasure I feel in my fingers
as I touch what I find. When I fall asleep it's not that serious and
I wake up often to look through the window an inch away from my eyes
and see if what I had seen still was, and what I see still is. When
I wake up, I'm alone, and that changes things, I realize how sweeter
as I bring them to be. When people come to visit and I watch them
take off their coats, I want to know how warm they are; I like them
better without the people in them. If I put myself under things it's
only to see what they look like. When you stop pulling me closer to
you, I'm also less prone to the other things. I realize that that
time is over slowly, and so it hurts slowly.

I want to make you my own, to put you closer to me and don't know
how. I want to know what you see, what it's like to move as you, to
have this space around you and take care of it, to be in it for a

lifetime of opening and closing. I'm curious about the way you've released yourself from choice and know staying only.

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Standing and progressively moving back to lie down on the floor, her hands tucked into themselves with the loose hair moving over and finishing. Mother won't be thinking, or maybe she will, but about something small, like a teddy bear or a rose on the window sill.

Being careful to take the necessary steps to make it through the stairs into the attic, looking back as much as forward and down because our *Mikado* sticks are spread in this wood. The white beard of a Santa Claus puppet in between the railing greeting my anxiety of going up.

Reaching that room to discover Mother looking out the window, her body unmoving in the sun. Her boxes filed across the wall, her images strung to each other and playing across the wall behind her back. A grasshopper passing by me to go downstairs, growing taller than me, older than me, ageless and blue on the floor of a summer attic in the fall.

Mother looking out at a boy sitting on the grass deconstructing a small toy train which he holds and turns on his lap. Wanting to understand what was inside, how it works better than why you feel, the grass in sepia, turning.

Going to meet him through the front door into dirt and then grass, seeing the boy small, the red train illuminating his face and warming his hands, wanting that too -him. Touching him through my crawl, he doesn't see me and sits there still, his legs crossed. I move behind him on the ground and touch his ears with my fingers and once with the back of my hand, trying to tell him I'm sorry. Instead, I look at what he holds illuminating him- and let myself be.

The rush inside and then still as the air cools outside and makes the house the warmer place to be in. The air slowing down inside, lowering on the walls and the floor, the counter in the kitchen and the porcelain in the bathroom, touching people sitting and lying, waiting. Mother with her legs raised against her chest and wrapped by the bare arms, sitting under the window with her head to the side, her eyes sweet and half closed in slow thought. The dress unfolding around her body.

The house dry and expectant, holding us on its floors, the doors and windows open to let the leftover breeze of a scalding day move through the empty rooms. No lights on because no one moves to turn.

Finding Daphne clinging onto the rail as her back strikes the steps; on top of the stairs looking down, his hand hovering over the arch of her back, his face next to her ear, her eyes stilled by the wood. Her mouth dried by the tasting of those steps.

A rock explorer she met on her way to the sea, Max held himself against the reef, his toes whitened by the cold, so she knelt by his knees, picked up each toe one at a time, and rubbed them back to warmth. They held each other after that, moving along the shore.

Max and Daphne each on a side of the front door's frame. He looks at her through the wet hair drying on his face, she with her head leaning on the frame, the forehead, nose and mouth touching it.

The three of us turning to each other, sitting on the ground, opening our mouths to exhale and silence denser in between filled by the difference between the interior and exterior of the house.

Finding a seashell next to Mama, she holds it on her palm and lays it on her chest leaning back. Her hand remains over the shell over the chest. She doesn't realize how much we want her new.

Mother outside washing her legs which she turns under the stream of water watching the dark soil spiraling down. Her skirt pulled up to the waist, she stands on one leg, sitting in front of the tap. I find her unmoved by the arrival of evening.

Trying out putting strings on each other's ears, pulling and watching the skin drag. Smiles between us as the smell of the rolls we played with in our hands and delivered inside the oven. Waiting to see them change, we saw the smell moving over and around the room touching Mother and choosing the spaces between the wood boards to nest.

A lady bug walking in through the open door and going near someone's elbow, trying on this new surface. But the someone looks disinterested, not moving at all besides the eyes, so the red dot retraces its steps and exits through the door and out. Outside there is at least the relief of nightfall and its lumière. The red dot looks left and right before venturing into the green mass ahead.

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Your coiled body small in a wheelbarrow pushing through the pine trees, lunging you forward and out to land just beneath the cut of one tree, the scraping of the pine cone taking you back, the metal pendants hung and the needles falling; you under, your front paws resting, your back sprung and ready to flow, the flour as snow, the coming back to the moss and his laugh and your laugh too in sequence, after his. Under me in the wheelbarrow there were two trains cowered behind my knees in the soft place where rashes settle.

I don't see how you agitate, I don't feel how you feel- only about the pieces that make up the train-, I know you're there but me behind your back and looking to the something else instead.

A toy train on its belly and his body on top of the blades of grass. I move around him, lowered, and glue the wet blades on his empty body, the humidity falling heavy on us and making us gasp for what remained undone, to do, my arms around you. The purple eyelids thinning to a point where they agree to let me see the black eyes,

and layered behind them the image of our mother kneeling on both knees, her head between them, praying. Her back curving snapping on my chest, I step back.

Your body bare, I hide and construct to make you ready, to prepare.

If I think, it's not of him, I touch and cover with strips of wet green in the dark lit by a perpendicular orange on our side.

Night turns, now rain, light and thick upon us, and I move faster because the water's fall transfers and subsides in my seeing his skin textured the same and yet colder, so I grab a fist full of soil soft and wet to spread over him warm. My visible breath working to intermix the different surfaces.

His body sinks a few inches into the earth. My face to it and my arm over his chest, my toes clutching, entering my nails and making me tender in the place where our house grows and our garden sinks in this night we find between us, making us readier for rest. If I prepare him, I prepare myself just as much. I tell you about things in our silence, opening it up to us, remaining stiller and watching less because rain falls between my eyes and the window, the high wall of green and the height of our house. I tell you in the way my arms feel the space within us and around us and fall to accompany the rest in not knowing, except they're the only ones who do.

Generosity.

My testament I write in your body I cover in wet blades of grass up and down in no particular order except that of someone holding back the emotion laid on you. There's no need to whisper, my words are all over you. Our being young breathes through the holing spaces the water opens and soon will close as clay. That being too young and somehow not enough for this thing our bodies accept in this moment I

sit and you lie, sink and stand, the wind picking up the trees
making it all the more ours, marking it further in this alternate
filter that makes us present, still here.

2.

She walks through the earth looking down at the chunks of dried, perforated soil. She walks barefoot like the ants, alongside them, perpendicularly or even against them, little black multiplied movements on their way to building palaces. These fields used to be drowned in flood for the most part of the year, the church would be alive with bells, and if you ran even farther along the path you would find the precipice of the sea. The sea, the church, and the earth. Only now is a different time.

The feet feel the lumps of soil pushing back against the hardened soles as if they were tiptoeing through the pointy roughness of sea bathed rocks on the shore. She imagines it so, accompanied by a whirlwind of salt saturated air, watery dreams of a sea she has yet to meet. But the thoughts are short and fleeting, the mind is absent and only the tiny signals sent by the skin manage to travel any distance before being assimilated into something else current.

A mile goes by, her eyes with the feet, but as the church starts to build itself up she looks up. She looks at the dark stones, darkened even more by the night falling upon them. There's nothing in the way of running: the skirt is pulled up to the waist, the legs shiver and flap holding the impact and the head moves forward in front of the rest, tilting slightly to the side. The mouth aspirates esuriently while the cold humid air thins the skin of the face, straightening it into plastic.

Night and running through the empty earth, halts before the thick root of a sycamore tree, but not fast enough to prevent the fall.

Little tissue torn, little fish swimming in blood. Let's go back, fishtails nodding in agreement. If they had scales they would be flattened, little cheeks smooth, their eyes would be closed and their full lips tightened in a compliant smile.

She feels ready to fall asleep with the night and the church with the long skinny shadow. The eyes close and the body doesn't move. There's a little hum which comes up the throat in vibration- she listens. She follows it through and the fingers rub the skin of the leg gently in the place where the root hit the bone, following the hum too.

There is nothing inside but stone, detailed stone carved into different shapes: arcs and circles, rays shooting dismally from above or the other way around. There are moons everywhere, I keep seeing, and the church becomes a little cosmos.

Cloisters come in intervals to space out the planets and my body is as the moving particle through space. Trees live in the open area, orange trees and lemon trees, standing out in oddity as I reach for one of the fruits still halfway through the process of maturation. The green fades into yellow which fades into moonlight inside the cloister. A bite is pondered: the prospect of acidity seems attractive, but something holds the hand some distance away and the movement is never finished into the mouth. The lemon drops and makes a plunking sound. I leave it rolling on the ground, moving into the nave.

There are no benches. I look at the markings on the floor. In some churches there are graves beneath the feet. There are none here. Or at least no inscriptions. The silence vacuums the air and pulls it up. I kneel- those marks on the stone, plasticine model of cold and softness of time-, my fingers more distressed than that other surface, infinitely more intricate and sensitive. What is it that you wanted to say? I know, be quiet, be gentle, be quiet.

It's dark and they dance in suspension, meteorites in astronomy. Arm pulled out from the core in tension towards the sky. Salute to music and image, I pray in movement. I walk through the cloisters, look up at night, look down at myself. I close the eyes and run blindly in circles through the concentric openings between stone and sky. Animal and me, trying out the echo, it's not my own.

Max beautifully transfigured into a sword, silver smooth threat up in the air, up the nave, in the corner frozen in liquid acer. It drips, touching the face, contouring the nose and the lips. It's neutrally sweet in adrenaline exuding from its point, wide and gradually thinner into Icelandic transparency.

The doors were left open back there, which I feel because the wind breathes in and out around my ankles, playing with the soft hair in my skin. You are carrying salt and the sea, and I play in it, forgetting each intake in a mnemonic, anemic fault- gift. My head moves as well, arching wicked in an owl approximation.

A cold snap of ethereal air, you are non-existent between the vertiginous columns. Climb up the watching height with your hands as claws and your feet laughing through the soft stone, letting yourself slip, legs apart. Being uncomfortably swollen as you walk down the nave- reticle smolder at the center, Salvia burning slowly, leaves crinkling in the space between stones. Time comes: instead of herbs between spaces, insert your fingers so they can grow. Fingers grow as plants and silent babies are born in the intervals: they can be plucked or kept safe where perhaps we do not look.

Your hair pulled back and squeezed tight, darkened by water. You are taken smaller and simpler. You come soaking still remaining under the blanket of liquid, no shoes. You come blindly awake through the interstice where white shapes preexist in the space you suggest to occupy. There's no battle for substitution, a mere shift to the side, they nod. It's in their mossy heads where babies grow, you take away. Removal of articulation in words.

Daphne with her head lying there, quiet with the most incredible smile on her face. The corners of her mouth pulled up and down as she moves her head along the skin. She listens- for what she wouldn't say. Her fingers search and from her a hmm hmm comes out.

Because her eye opens, the one farthest, she sees yesterday's lemon rolling towards it. It's in a fluorescent yellow awkwardly moving in stumps. It slows down and stops, touching the eyelid. The eyelid closes to greet the lemon. The lemon stops.

3.

John is older and knows all the little places where we gather our seashell musings. John doesn't know what is kept by us untold. He used to say we'll be equal only when we have all been bent. One day, he went to the wheat fields and laid in the putrid sun until he believed every part of his skin had been washed. He keeps sheep in the back of his house, only one or two for a while now. We hear their noise when we gather near the fire. John speaks well and more than us: his words elongate in a way that reminds us of dreams played with curiosity to smooth our restless voices. When noise springs up and increases steadily in intensity, we lose bit by bit the ability to discern reality, even if elaborated, and our eyes appear to be sucked into immobility. Weary of tension, we lay our bodies sequentially and allow our child's skin to be observed by the sky. Open sky, limpid and coronary blue, no vestige of the night's impression.

It is warm between us on the ground made of straw and John peers at us in intervals, coming out of the clay house and standing in its shade. He leans awkwardly against a washing tank eating salted pumpkin seeds and spitting the peels onto the drain. A tray of these small earthlings sits in the sun.

John is hurt if we pretend not to see him, he wants acknowledgment and good behavior from our pretty little heads burnt by the heat. His saying is written by the sun in our foreheads, but words are not scarred- skin peels at night in our beds. Max is withdrawn and will not look at John, his refusal less rebellious than imposed. There's little interest in becoming an alternate Max: his transfiguration is

slowly sinking, speaking of things ahead of us or much further behind. It's a persistent blurring acting in repeated motion, the presence of a body.

He was stung one day in the wheat fields, his eyes fell with tears and his mouth swelled and his teeth shrank. Daphne rolled to the side and caressed his face, his body not moving. John looked at us from the washing tank and stopped eating his seeds. There was the wind chilling and the clouds murking. I felt empty throughout as if the consistency of weight had fallen without holes, a submarine without periscope. I sat straight up with my back turned, the happenings happening on my back and not in me: I looked ahead over the spikelets and heard nothing, as when all has been washed through and completely, drowned off its sounds and laid down to dry.

Phantom bread travels, we are removed from the scene and allowed to watch. Three sitting around the tree with our knees raised and our elbows lowered. We see John and he's far enough for our eyes to moisten with the strain of not blinking, of wanting to capture the smallest of figures immobile. There's always the smell of loafs descending from the tree's branches and twigs. Our feet clap and our mouths contort. The expansion of landscape is arguably infinite. We feel as travelled as the old animal.

The day is coming to an end with us doubled and really only one John. The immensity of power overflows and froth evaporates. We walk towards the giant excusing mother tree. We revel, we dream, and are poisoned by its nurturing tomb.

Max gets better and we get back, settling into our own shapes. Daphne strokes his Daedalus head; I look away, my back still turned. Night is here even before we see it. Our bodies could have been replaced and swept between night and day. Anticipation and euphoria tighten amongst us, and John can feel it too, still exactly where he has always been. We feel ageless and born into our senses again and for the first time, each membrane stretching in want of growth and always falling slightly short. When senses fail, they are reconfigured somewhere else, leaving open and exposed all that we can see is alive.

Surprised and full of dexterity we beacon each other, we appreciate each other, we gather full of hate all we were never supposed to feel. Headstone full of dreams of a land of wheat, salty seeds jazzing about and up our arms and closing the heart in. The neck is left alone white. Our hair can only be the tentacle ship in which we travel small, sitting on the bone of the eye, steering and excited about what we hear down below. Water gurgling in the back of the throat and a spontaneous laugh and a jump up and grinning smile and happiness over the beginning of things forgotten. We are reminded of and repeat stories of adventure and the way a father would tell- we are children still savoring, perpetually licking the melting ice cream, our hands freezing, holding it up and a treasure- and also the freedom to let it melt, and watch it, and rejoice, and go away and up, up.

We are all guilty about John, he's our weight in the barefoot feet as we walk through the fields again and happen to see each other and

look and discover. He's the one we won't tell and the one who was lost in one of our hiding places. None of us would ever go back. The consciousness of this presence, sea salt covering it all over, stagnant and preserved, will fall away quickly as dismembered statue- pillar of salt of fantasy and dream. John will leave his watching post and return to the ships.

Burning wood, let us follow the smell of smoke through the yeasted path in wheat. Diminished scavenger burns circling back in white through the exuding holes of forestry, large shaken leaves moving from the stem in rude tidal spasm, ripples in disharmonious belief of minuscule trade, rudimentary feel.

A kindred garden of jotted lint gathered in handfuls of soft fur- my night's painting in crosses kept guarded behind rests assured of my devotion to sleep.

It went away, we all still sit.

All of us on our sides fallen asleep lightly, the bees' buzz monitoring our breaths. Some of them velvety insects rest on top of our stomachs, shifting communication. We look like three corpses already. But we can't be, for the bees' buzz is monitoring our breaths. We are asleep.

Letting yourself go in a scream, Daphne says. Beautiful dreaming. It's him, holding, but it's your dream, so it's you holding yourself, baby bee.

4.

There's space for six buttons but only five hold in place. There's an extra one sewn on the inside lapel. Every time you run your fingers down, you make the gesture to button the third, but there's nothing on the left side; on the right remains the closed house. Daphne leads the way down the stairs, doesn't turn on the light but spreads the curtains apart- stands there for some time with her back turned to me. There's a round column in the middle of the room, a sort of pillar covered with cloth, and sewn in it are buttons made of fabric. Hundreds of buttons, I realize, by coming closer and moving around it. I move to touch them. I look closer: each has two circles tied by white thread. I look closer. It's moist. I look up- a drop falls on the eyes; they close- it runs through the face, lowered; it drops on the instep and slides between the toes. I look at her: she's very still, with her back turned. I move backward, the wardrobe is open. I step in and close the door. There's no air and no light. I lift my arms and rest them by the wrist on the single hanger.

In the house of light when you come up through the earth to the empty room, one day she unravels her collection of cloth and stands on it and then progressively lies down. The fabrics move under each other even as her body lies, closing her eyes looking at me on the window sill, falling backward, her heels firm. The room offering the space. The window frame in me as the fabric in her. The hair on my face coagulated in sweat like his eyes were covered under his. My right ear picking up the current which ran touching the land, bringing up its presence to enter. My upper body bent backward over

the space of the window, the frame pressing itself against my lower back.

Inside, the grasshopper leaps and stops at the bridge of the hanging foot. The left leg shudders. I hear him on the other side. Daphne is in the center. Daphne, Daphne, Daphne.

I find you folding every piece of cloth you can find, your arms bending and stretching methodically as you search through the room for more. I ask you why and you say why not. You pile them in a corner and leave the rest deserted- you cross your legs next to it and sit; you close your eyes, raise your arms above your head, grab your wrists and smile- you tilt them over. They spread again, different colors raising themselves above each other, ordering, so the floor becomes slick. You whistle to him and he comes trotting above that slickness. He presses his head under your knee and raises it and you let him. You grab his ear and pull it to yourself, you find its curves and redraw them to his ear, that pattern unfolding, you making it dissolve and happen again.

How she moves onto a space and through it, her arms twisting around her own center to hold herself in place, and her mind falls in layers succeeding out in a soft range spreading through her skin onto the floor. She touches them and screams in movement only, to try this new way of communicating through absence. She signals me closer. Brings me closer to touch her and wrap her and seat her telling her in this new way how her own swelling body accepts the moving forward and wants to open itself, older and tenser, heavier.

5.

The transparent rose and yellow waving through the plies are crossed by glow-worms and descend coming to a stop at the table. As the temperature lowers in the roofless barn, these are fleshed apart through Mother's bony hands, spiny and soft, revolving pieces as dough.

His beak restrained in movement, the screwed pecks paralyzed in wound, macerated red resting. While the beak doesn't withdraw, it loses momentum and that seems to weaken it. Ivory extremity holding, his back curved forward over her in exertion, his legs curled beneath him with the blood wanting to reach them choked upwards instead. The purified sweat is absorbed by the loose brown pants and then released onto the straw floor soaking the dust in specific points.

He calls her nothing, my small nothing, but most often allows himself to fall prey to the blanket silence reaching its hands for his outer skin, highs and lows equally taken in as testament. Keratin twisting flesh. In her, the coin wounds are breathed upon through the two holes in the beak, a regular stream of air ejected into them.

Mother takes the ivory bill and using basalt rock crushes it inside a cup producing a fine dust. Delicately transferring it to a metallic tea infuser taken out from the rooster's pocket, she spins it in small concentric circles, sprinkling the dust over the two clenched bodies below.

Wet soil raked, wind-blown green raised up and around porcelain stairs leading up to the wood door; metal knocker lifted and

dropped, night lone, mid-waist walled in barbed wire sort. A muscle tired on the tiles, dog hue battered again into a forceful epistemology on grass laid. Everything in skin color zest.

The dust is sprayed over them and the straw. Mama retires to a seatless chair leaning against the wall in the corner. There's a hole where the seat should be, splinters on the edges, but a cloth has been nailed over to cover the extension of the missing wood. Mother sits with her eyes closed and her hands wrapped on her lap. The black dress puffs to the ground. The grasshopper jumps and clings to the bottom causing the hem to move back and forth for some time.

Daphne plays her hand into the cartilage curves of his ears. They hear the moving within the grain's hull, the straw creating a dry echo of music nipped on the top tip, and adjust under her fingers, a discrete reflex to which she doesn't respond although surprised and pleased. A shaft spears from the inside through and is caught between the skin and the fingernails. Residue covey underlying the thin threads of hair wool fluff. The opening of her mouth twists and a small rivulet of saliva tips over, drying before reaching mid cheek. Nine small pleasures withdrawn from the adjusting face, the dot making it full.

Breathing deeply and closing the eyes, swaying back and forth- a conspiracy with the earth-, the wind blowing the exposed sweat on the neck, the hair falling over the rocking chair towards the grass. Tall grass, uncut. Hearing the sound of bees hovering around a

nearby flowerbed of nigellas and tasting the acidity of a lemon squeezed over the little puddle of honey gathered in the center of the tongue.

My weight over him, uncompromised, my ears held, returning light in a glimpse of multicolored fish skin. All days past come to integrate and thicken the parts, herbs and tree roots standing in for language. My bladder squeezed in little knots of light stitched in heat. I breathe through those knots. I observe, dragging, the broken impediment relieving its breath over me. His shift under mine. Not much longer now, he says, his smile rising up to the eyes. The lines around us arrive, come tighter, dissolved in humidity drawn, boxes closed in want for something over panic. Those strings separated in twos abiding incongruent with the nausea. Little slopes rising from the smooth surface, tiny thuribles suspended in mid circumvolution.

Mother sits and pulls out a strand of hair laying it on her lap. Picking through it, she braids the white hairs into one thick mesh, which she weaves back into her pinned up hair. There's a second draw, but now the colorless threads are slipped through the eye of the needle kept locked in the buttonhole on her chest. She sews through the hem of the dress pulled up to the knees. The exposed legs underneath reveal brown patches of darkened skin permanently branded by the sun. The spots grow wider accompanying the curve of the flesh around the tibia and disappear up the hollow within the skirt. The unmarked parts, marble colored, are made to match with a pasty appearance of fallen unfeathered ash. As the fine white seam moves along the bottom of the cloth, the eyes underneath the closed

eyelids move repeatedly as if reading the subtitles of her sewing. Only very rarely does the fair hair break in her hands, but it's still used, the needle rethreaded with the two pieces, sewing back.

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She feels the asperity and wonders, small, mitigated, how to feel less so- is it the careful passing of her own hand? Baby Mama squats in the middle of the road, the vacancy of late hours allowing so, and hovers close to the concrete which expels the heat of a scalding day. Baby Mama knows and revels. Her face creases as the heat moves up into the macerated flesh; her own heart shifts, which she realizes, the pounding tilted so as to run more smoothly, diagonally, lubricous, consciously hard in intent-giving. Thoughtful passing inside, blending into her so that she blinks longly, taking her time squatting on a road that is as empty as the drift sand sculpting its path through rock formations, dunes and a mud volcano. Only it is also the road in a street bordered by solitude houses. There is no street lighting but one or two orange blurs not too close and not too far, the incandescence of the night sky providing. Her back falls slowly backward from its bent position protecting the thighs and her legs remain tucked so that only the soles of the naked feet, her back and the hair feel the pavement. Mother inhales and her arms open onto the floor. She rests, a residue forming. There are two- and both.

Baby Mama's face, swollen and emaciated, points towards the night sky extending. Baby chews with his soft gums. Mother forgives the

residue escaping from her, feels herself tender and forgiving, spent and sweet. A clear force sectioned inside her accumulates in organized favor, small successive rebellions marching their path on an open canvas.

We wish you a Merry Christmas Papa, Baby says. In an empty kitchen Baby feels Christmas and sees Papa holding a log in the air, his arm above his head, head leaning slightly towards the arm looking at the log. Flakes of wood are loosened shortly and fall in a circle around his body. Baby's hands clap encouragingly even though no reaction is produced. Baby persists. Mother comes in, puts on gloves and washes the pile of dirty dishes and mugs. When she leaves, the kitchen is emptier. The log is still in the air, held in the exact same position, but Baby is calmer, sitting in his high chair against the wall, silenced and petrified in soothing peace. Flakes from the log continue to fall and build an airy wall which dismantles itself from time to time.

Light is evaporating. It's getting whiter. If Baby was slightly taller he would watch through the window other people's windows, some dark, some orange. A kind of self-regulating pitch, monotoned and continuous and unbreakable, a living wire running through North and South never falling. It's getting whiter.

Mama comes in, turns on the tiny portable radio and leaves. It's barely audible. Baby's eyes are fixated on the plastic tray where his hands contour the edge. Papa steps out of the wall, feeds the

log into the stove and leaves. Baby's eyes get incredibly tired, but still do not blink: has he forgotten?

Baby's seat gets warmer. He feels an excruciating warmth spreading from the center and out towards the legs stretched horizontally on the pad. Baby closes his eyes. Baby doesn't see the wall of wood flakes crumbling down.

So short and transient, never holding long enough and barely existing but in the absence it leaves behind. Stay longer, let me see you. But it's getting darker and no one moves to light up the room. Only Baby in the room and still no one moves. What is seen is getting whiter and whiter, harder to sustain.

The oval lady bug inside the vest crawls up the bramble looking to nest quietly near one of the inflammations. Papa carries it with him as he walks up the stairs at night.

In a single file through the dust path, their heads burned-out, turned backward, their throats silent, their eyes mellow sweet, incandescent bellies lighting the way. Persistent, they carry through unguided and without burden as their faces slip, pulled forward, thinned, purified by the damp, black moisture spiraling. Frozen in cold surprise, passing through Baby's cold glass, coming in the room secretly as comfort for Baby, warning silently Baby.

White bed, white linen soaked in liquid, Baby sick. Baby anemic, golden hair barely there. His skin soft and thin, his eyes like fish's. The lamp lit, window open, curtains fluttering- which makes

Baby happy. A small line of bees arming the windowsill are stilled by Baby's regular puffs, minimally audible, simple wings put to rest on the side.

With their necks closer to fabric, Mama and Papa allow the lungs to expand through skin and out, opened along with gently breakable vertebrae. When tiny mosquitoes land on the wood board, their own arrival mitigated by heat, the endurance is over. They shrink into black harbors nesting in the open chest. Respiration becomes easier, slower and slightly dragged. Asking for the incontrollable nod pushing the head forward, pulling it back, attempting a solitude, self-sacrificing, ritualized, forestry happenings wrapping the body around, night closing in and sealing off the bundle. He's sweet, he endures, remains, a strange paleness bringing forth reasons to perceive better. He's silent, hands lowered in pockets, straight back, hair curled, avidness absent. He's thin, pants ironed, shoes worn tidily, sweater loose.

Shuffle back and forth your tiny sleeping torso. Through the brain's biforked tongue, put a little knot in the vein clotting the inner thigh- a bow to unlace with your mind.

-

When things go quiet, your stomach full and round, the insects full and stinging no more, moving slowly or not at all, the skin scalding and repelling touch, little rivers of water running between fingers and legs- discharge, little light, no wind. No appetite, insipid

hollow, swam wide. It's the treasure happening, moles throughout the skin content in octal crusts. Two traces of a blade carving through, the pungency locked away until happenings wash over and say now. The feet are cold, the tips more than the sole, but still. Needless to say, the feeling of burn is false, flakes telling how much there is still to go. An afterbirth of peachy color and smell alienated towards the embrace of a boy apparent in his dexterous delay. You feel it slipping and you catch it before it falls. You watch the growing, decadent, the newness coming into being as the hours delay-iridescent swarming up the tilted hillside along the sea air, everywhere above the concrete pavement and cobblestone sidewalk greyed intenser by the snow frozen dew. Rain hits the kern's button escape, empty balconies standing in reverence to it emptied by wetness in blanket, a grasshopper sticking to the barefoot rugosity allowed.

Her hands work tiresomely within flesh opening space through close knit tissue, muscle thickness, burrowed bone oscillating as her book's pendulum. A small animal fighting against itself, paws scattering the inside nerve transversely cut- life-born afterbirth. The tilted sailor's hat jumps to cover the push and pull of the hands, tearing through bubble membrane into open space.

Hers, her tiny shoes, child, clasped and hung on the door's nail. Barn door, rusty speck nail, Mother never eyed, Max and I never saw, and then there's only you. Daphne, my child's baby, my baby.

1.

With her knees laid in water, her stomach hovers over the water. Through the skin, Baby dips his toes in the water and trembles all the way up inside her belly. The Sallow roots tighten the soil around the stream and move in the same way as Baby. The mother's Sallow is inside her, dragging its members through the liquid.

His smallest foot pushed out of me and pressed against my inside and waking me up. The impression of a foot unyielding. Water floats, brink where our hands play. Feeling the shape of a foot under a layer of skin, discerning the volume and the five and the little pyramid, all of this filtered by a skin and my own, which I could never think possible.

Washing over the river slowly, a body afloat and the wind floating, the weight of passing water and the dirt carried through.

Send a little paper body through the river- across. Making sure the paper is thick, looking over our shoulders, stitching ourselves as before the drop of paper in the water- one body, stops and bows once while our closed eyes play behind. Him who builds is a builder of things, folding time and time again the paper body. Gravity working without us listening.

I go skipping stones all the way up to the Highlands' shore with Baby by the hand and ears full of dull murmurs, ghastlying a kind of liquid as much in pray form as the washings will allow. Sweet and salty running down the neck, clustering around the hip bones.

Every time I skip, Baby's feet float in the foggy air, and when we reach the quick stream, Baby wants to sit in the current. He sits. Baby's laughter internalizes, weathered, composing a thick black shirt of voices echoing each other in tiny centigrade mirrors. I put it on and lie down on the water washed rocks by his side. Wet, the voices remain, but change slightly in the way they transmit their splurged content. Given the opportunity of contact with the rope, the sounds attach to it, pinned more or less surely and thus able to expand their conquests further inland. Inland in our chests, mine and Baby's, in an almost closed circuit which empties itself in the passing from telling to told. Baby's instinct is to follow closely the thinning of the rope and to pull it with his gums, running it between the spurting teeth until it is no more than a thread.

I ate your pumpkin seeds with sleepy eyes following you around in me. The world never thin enough, persistently there, yearning itself, spread, flexed, rubbed on the floor of wood, of dream in transparent soot falling. An appetite creased in wanting, sleeping dormant, it rested coiled in coffins of tiny finger lengths. Tree roots shoot under their appetite closer to mine, ours, they eat away what remained of the unburied obscure, purposefully impenetrable, they say.

Your hand an awning, a magnifier to the tired eyes crisscrossing infinite thresholds. You are mine to keep.

Forgetting to wind, we rest on the rocks looking inward. Baby's eyes look at you, your scales reflecting the night's dark.

The golden dimming already but made more intensely so, the air stale and pressing like a pressure chamber released quietly. Sounds withdrawn and tucked into tissue pockets; human absence only in abstract terms; actions blown in senseless dilations. The passing past.

Sitting on the rocks and watching the plastic vessels hum across the sand, realizing the bluntness with which everything is carried through, and when I say everything I mean only you; every note blinking through what exists and then off somewhere a little farther so an arm is forced to stretch and the body to stand up and follow. Five followers walk in a line one behind the other. Trains on their feet, smoking. Each train with its wheels and the log which connects them circling back and forth creating the lines of sprayed bubbles of ink in the air around their legs. Their arms move in their own circles and produce the gentlest current around the bodies. Tips of five with a small muted rattle at the end of each one- sewn underneath are their overflowed bits adjusting impossibly with a spin. Small whirls form and dissolve within each rattle buttered by the melting yellow running down.

A whirl shuffles the rained aperture. The skin trembles white and cold. Broken seashell fragments shattered under my feet; wrinkled, salty foot, looking oddly at me. They are slowed down for us to see while breaking, smiling intermittently, wailing gently.

--

All of them in a box under my dreams and a quilt never sewn. I sit and pour the boxes onto the quilt and I move my arms right and left, up and down, back to the inside of seams, trying to balance things. The quilt doesn't hold. The sounds as they make their way under the cupboard: they clock, they hand, they growl. His sharpened nose sniffs me and his muzzle rubs my leg and my arm and my ear.

-

The baby shivers with cold. His baby skin wrinkles inside like lettuce. I hold him bare, I shiver too. Snow falls and melts the ice, ice falls. Stalactites form in the back of his throat, I see, as I gently open his lips. Even as they remain, there's the slowing down, clarity of falling movement- bonds are strengthened and hardened, solidified with night's inertia as waves come through. His baby mouth is all crawled up, doesn't make a sound. I watch his black eyes, he's there. Soon we'll be comforted in our holding space: we'll smile, Baby and I.

Clothes are removed and dropped. Baby is crying somewhere far, a rag holding noise inside his mouth. I kneel- he's on the floor between the wall and the toilet. His body is wet, his skin has rashes on the inside of his elbows and behind his knees. I remove his clothes too, unwrapping him. I find his back darkened with a blemish spreading up from his lower back. I hold him and move towards the shower. I carry us both in, his mouth, now free, clinging gently onto my clavicle, absently, no teeth, just the two gums.

Warm water falls from the shower head hitting my legs. I lie down holding him on my chest, the small squared tiles pressed onto my

back; we settle, my legs up, parallel to the wall. I look down and he looks up, two blacking eyes. He likes the sound of water and is calmer, the vapor eases his skin and allows it to breathe. His eyelids close and I see the skin is red there too. His body relaxes and his arms spread around my waist, his face nests precisely where the rib cage meets. I hear his breath slowing down. I turn off the water and close my eyes.

It's not tiredness but a sense of vacuity resting me in against the skin, that same sadness permeating and dissolving in the moisture falling on my hand on Baby's back. I enjoy having him there, pleasure layering with sadness.

Baby's head is on its side, his hair gathers in small clusters unevenly spread- there's no redness there, he looks healthy there, a smooth scalp, round meeting two ears, only one I can taste and see. The shower head drips erratically, but the drops fall between his legs and hit me below the navel, sliding most often to the left. They wake up the haziness, but slumber is what Baby and I share. His skin breathes onto mine and reassures me of both of us, of the place in our body, a presence that slips and is tucked away with the needlework of long-haired women. My hair whitens, loses color as Baby earns his. We almost meet on our way, we could have met on the floor of a shower disappearing in a closed-door room. Baby's head turns to the other side.

2.

In that laying of the head in the self-lap, sooth-ing with her wrist a hair connected to her own head because when you follow the threads, long and hard, they lead back to a skull you've felt for a great number of times before. Your hand self-caressing the oily tears wetting a girl's black hair. Where did you come from tiny love? A girl's black hair wrapped around the drain which the fingers look for, astonished, opening in an expanded yawn of stress.

Three dented teeth stick out and are used to scratch the body in its full length, the mind decelerating and decaying into black liquid. The more you know the less and less you retain. You get so soft and innocent looking out through the window at night. Push aside troublesome drapes- heavy things are only heavy once as you clear them out of the way-, taking off your shoes in the cold surface to rest upon and feel unburdened by: rotate your heels in black blood, slip, break some part of yourself, keep thinking of repetition and learn what it is that makes you miss yourself on your way to standing on the black skinny shadow of a church. Words sitting tidily on shelves, waiting to be picked up.

A cuckoo clock nests next to the window over the bath, night moves in closer, the cuckoo is creepy. The shell is thrown against the cuckoo and both fall in the water. The nail is left semi-hooking the air: you picture yourself hooked by the back with your feet playing with the surface of the water. You feel nauseated and close your eyes. Starry nights are drawn with words long and short measured by the opacity or translucency which falls on their surface.

If you stand in front of the window which extends from high above your head right to your ankles and pull it towards your chest and stand in that space between wall and glass, look at the distance hidden by the night's dark and you'll realize what moves you forward. If the air is fresh and cold, feel your own presence and the landscape that expands from your disappearing body into new; if the air is warm and heavy, sink lower into the discerned shapes, moving progressively back into your own.

3.

Found a way to navigate through. Wrung his neck and found a way to get in him through. Learned to stop and move over hurt. Swallow it, I heard them say. Learned to navigate and bore ourselves through. If it gets transpired through, if it breaks along the way through, if you see the whiting black, if you become the whiting black. If you lose the spot you knew to be sensitive to change, if a bee melts its honey over you to wrap you in its liquid and say you'll get nowhere through... the tree branches you could have resorted to. A hand in hand, tree dissolving in you me.

Resettling back into the rectangle. Opens and closes with me laid in it. Hoping that it was enough, that it stuck, that it wasn't mindlessly done once again, but had at least the purpose of being passed on and marked- they'll hold it. Making you a child so you may see it like that again. And the rediscovery is new, the learning is new, the fall and then up is as intense as the night your belly turned with the closing of the door at the end of the room- her steps.

Draining monster in you. Maybe silence really would have been better, to let the thing broil and simmer and die and you all like a statuette. This acidity remaining, all but retelling you the tales of absinthial guilt. Repeat and regret and wish this was the last never time.

He bore the noise of body and water, he bore me, so still.

When the nose is stretched to touch the eyes and the hands over the eyes, when everything is over, listen Baby to the way our world is

touched one way or another, the way it is described and the way it is thought of. Listen to the words missing from their mouths, to the lost arc which is bent, how it is pushed and kept untidy and violent. Listen Baby, to the way our eyes close when we think no one is looking and there's no need anymore. Sleep always before nature, oatmeal and caramel- stick the sounds together so they are not stopped before the ears and fall. Listen to your fingers, how they sense the fall and smooth the path into a dream. Listen Baby, for the cold cold born out.

All the little leaves high up, farther, happening in jitters moved by pulse, saying how do you do and then silenced, quieted. Only some now, red shading intermittently in message. Darker straws are pulled out onto the table and reimagined, elastic. They allow for slow retrieval, cadence.

1.

Reaching a Highlands birth place, opening a box and closing the door behind me, looking across the room, the fur and the small wood stove and the white incandescence dimming in through the window onto the floor, which I gather under me to hold. A short brush rug, asperous; a small stool with a woolen quilt pulled down; pieces of grass trailing in, yellowed, dry, I want to; wind shuffling to follow, smoke smothering within the stove- the wet kitchen, unused, stale, separate from the small room with the door.

The metal bucket in the middle of the room filled midway with water and soap, shrinking in it, pulling the heavy corduroy. The green becoming darker when splashed, the soaked fabric coming as I pull, piling it in heaps over me. I lean back with my head resting on the sharp metal edge.

A package from the sea, water spreading on top of the wool, books in dark. The lustrousness of an impending, but what allures is the dismaying light folding in successively discreet, the openness around an absence, a body broken and made to lift and spread over a landscape that has nothing to do with you, that is nowhere but you. Open.

The room with no temperature but the outside's. A hat tipped over the face, a sweater pulled up and above the hat, over-excess- slow movement of the legs around the room and the rest too, the arms careful: lifting a log, splintering wood, a match scratched simply; the feet on the floor turned to the side and inside to the center,

the body as if a child only very serious and dry. The dimming deepening lower into the corner, trapped between the stove and the wall. Dark corner.

The cold protecting and the neck hidden, the allergy within the heavy fabrics worn in austerity of memory, the before of years, of thinning the fabric and no substitute; the heat of the body circling around the space heating it in slow parallel to the wood fire, the wind knocking to follow- there's a trade slowly happening between the greyness of the window and the orange of heat.

There's the oldness in the breath hollowed in from escaping, but instead the cap pulled lower, the rubbing of the chest and the smallness of not knowing why.

The absence of sound except the sounds of a dark room lit by a wood stove and a woman pacing slowly inside and gradually stopping that too. The glass which colds more and more, I feel, as I brush my back against it and sit on my heels, a head held by the ear to turn to the side.

There's a large pocket of air in the room as the objects lay themselves closer to the floor. Even with fire, it's still cold- a humidity prickly to the touch of an old wool. There's still the silence in remembering as I raise myself up and see through the window the largeness at the tip, the looking full, the memory full, not of past-- forward instead.

The other wood consumed slowly in the wood stove, its ashing sounding from time to time, pull ups. The wind rushes down inside the stove and I look at it there, from underneath a stool, the cheek rubbing the veins grown under.

Waiting hidden in the mid light of a small lamp on the floor next to the door. The knees tucked toward the chest, there's a cringe but it's brief, the impression imperializing: brain and heart run and merge in a short moan. The grasshopper quiet on top of the bristles, its legs carefully positioned in between so the jaws lay resting on top, the waiting echo of a room. The dreaming of exactly what I feel and know, just to remind me I do, so the knees go back, the back too, and the face still stuttering, firming the cold wood.

The extension of feeling through the rolling of parched dough underneath Mother's fingers, Mother's mouth unabidingly slow and careful and closed. That she doesn't speak and seems sad holds me long. That I feel now this want to look up to things and so to lower myself, body parallel to the wood, flakes of soil underneath, to look up or close the eyes, a harder down spreading in. That that lowering is not enough. Wrapping the head in cloth, the wool cleaning itself onto me, leaves me bare and not there.

Is not enough, but it's more than known. It's implicitly wanted only, but not known, the tip of a Highlands house peeking through-will hold me long. Not there.

Shorts and the smell of warmth, garden or varnished stairs, the emptiness of a pool, people there and gone: a parent there, the

other soon, the boy- and me looking, not there. The boy and glasses:
abundance shows because there's hardly anything there, it's open.
Empty, open. Moving backward into simpler at night, I know, cooler
and a turn in the car, the soft curve, the slowly pulling up to a
new house- there's still so much to see.

2.

Short haired, open empty room, walking new above the floor reflecting shadows coming through; walking slowly, each toe gripping the wood beneath, arms free to feel the hair and the head turning sideways hugged by the hands, no snap, slowly...; walking feeling the knees, growing legs up the open-ended clothing.

There's the mouth of the fireplace, another opening, second dark; there're the fixtures with no electricity. There's the emptiness, cracking and echoing.

The walls go up infinitely even though there's no movement to look up to. There's the silence. The mouthwatering openness, expectations towards the inexistent, the wide brain opening into the eyes closed. The trying to preserve the feeling. The dragged whistle of the unfamiliar.

Holding. Nails scratch thinly and reveal the inexperienced. Towards the column painted white, approving the dissimilar. Reaching a corner and standing, looking back at the current- there's the unused. Confirmed unknown.

Lack of light lit by side or external ways, she sits and opens up a third and fourth layers, the air poses and sits slightly too.

There's the body diving, sliding through the ground, licking the reflected shadows; there's the naked skin looking around, the wetting light pouring and turning, still white, the shattering of glass. There's the outside coming in. The sliding torso, the pinned knees. There's it, turning on its back and up to see. The meeting of perfectly acclimatized bodies- one out, one in. The hole of the pool still in cement. A firefly lands.

There're the hollow stairs, steps, a dozen feet, cringing.
Transparent and furry, walking up, transparent. There's her,
murmuring, still on the floor, interrupting. The firefly is turned
off.

Walking again towards the open cement, she steps into the hole and
falls.

Looks through the filter of light, walks around the room to wear
herself down, kneels in front of the brush and the grasshopper and
looks into his eyes, rolls over, looks at the ceiling and the thick
wood beams fall. Crushed and sweet. Tender. The bucket spills, the
water furrows the openings, tentacles the skin, enlarges the veins
in the wood. The beams don't move, their weight enlarging over me.
His insect body goes.

I think crushed, open my mouth, a second way in, I think crushing.
To go nowhere, to go further- inland or sea- a current of air moving
by and around, I think of a woman not my own. A standing woman. An
aging time spreading over me, I think of gardening, I think of
gardens, being with him and then alone. Wanting to be big and then
small, feeling a baby in a dream, entering and leaving bedrooms, a
place you move around in in your mind and discover an entire dream
in. Arguing with words, only that's not how you argue. Wanting to
say and falling short today and shorter after. Holding it, it's not
there. Being two things, trying to make it only one. What is not
there, wanting what stood behind. Making things smaller, making
things bigger, every day younger and increasingly neutral; the hard
texture of objects prying you in and closing your body in boxes on a
white table.

Hears the wind cracking through to the inside of the room, walks herself, pacing, her naked skin contracting. Opens the front door. Moves herself out. Now what you hear is a Highlands dream.

3.

Goes to lay a body in the sea, carries it in her arms, her body strains, ignited. Her dress speared, loose and free, a body in her arms. Her hair already wet even though it hasn't reached the sea, the hair in the body sleek all around. Her skin whitened, his too, the blood that's left having a hard time going back. Her shoulders rounded forward, his tucked toward hers, a body in a black shell going back for the first time. Going alone to the sea, I believe there's something to look forward to, my sweet, my love- I never said, bear with me. The seeds still stuck to his chest, the salt diluted and gone, I believe them when they say we won't go. He's inert. He gave himself in. Bear with me still, my body my love. I look him on. I look at him, carrying him. There's always that heavy grain falling us, a greying of the weather that washes us darker. We move, carried as if in a train.

The abdominal muscles strain, her legs tighten and bend, her chest sinks lower and forward, one foot reverses itself, the bridge coming into contact with the soaked sand. His body laid. Her tongue running free, his chest cleaned of seeds salt touching his hair. Her tongue running free, water comes, her kneeling, his laying. Small layers of water spreading over slowly, wanting, clear; his shirt removed, her arms closing, her eyelids double-seeing tremble. Her dress taken and folded carefully, lowered into the tide. Fog and hair standing up. Her standing and looking at the sea, him no longer there, his chest to the sand as much as his nose and mouth. Water moving higher to them, her not moving. Him not moving. Highlands' height vertiginously sliding.

Dog nestling with his paws sinking deeper into the quicksand of the shallow tide, his head lunged forward, his eyes closed and then open, blinking. His ears tipped to the side, salty too, her naked body, his. Hers in his.

There's more water in the air, weighing down and around. Them dripping, a small tucked body of a hound, his belly extended and bare. The dog nestled next to him, tucked except his muzzle opening slightly to reveal, his tongue moving in him as well, second caring for salt. Both submerged for an instant, higher layer and then backward; her still standing, her chest bare too. Her face heavy, swollen and sore. Her release forward. The fall held and stopped. Approximates, is pulled back, but still falls, continued in wanting, no feeling- Garbo.

A love laid down to rest, accompanied and small, a decision made without words spoken or thought, happens. To remove and think. Tilt and feel. Taste see remember, washed and taken, traveling troubadour.

Hearkens to coming from the sea, reaching home. Two shoes lowered and placed on the mat. A mole in the second to last finger of the left hand as it reaches down and is put back. Small mole.

As it leaves herself behind, the land planting, people muting, no longer about beauty, leaving sound behind as well; the feeling parsed and rolled over, made thinner and without, made sole; the impersonal body given to the tongue and absorbed whole as it lays;

the no longer bought or brought in- in the middle- surrounding space.

A land of no emptiness crushing sweetly my coming in, my wanting to, finally.

Stepping forward the foot the eyes watch dumbfound and slow, the hours moved since being last there, the strangeness finding in again in the run around; the setting sweet coming down, a diminishing, the making less, love, lessening, to learn that lesson stricken now and held whole on the surface. Not the coincidence.

Sitting down bare as the body you laid, sitting down in the dryness. Soil up and down curving in with your skin.

The no need now reduced, simmering down to the bending of sitting and moving back and forth in between, intermitting.

Not yet the soil coming in, no longer closer to the heat of a setting sun- if you go up there and open, it's orange on both and double scalding- semi-round, a half oval, a moon, scream tightened-, but back down: no wetness. And yet it's already there, coming in the prelude of night, on a bare land. Back up, the hand heightened and lowered in front of seeing far into the opening of a land- called long, over time.

The hat covering the head of the knee, round softness on the palm of your hand.

The coldness of turning around the things that were given and delivered there, in front of you, brought to your knees, made to grow. For you. For you. Make it grow.

Crossing the road, your legs rigid and hard to use, made slow through the bones by the sudden wave of morose time (not yet passed, trapped between the shuttered windows opened and closed with the rush), the heat losing made tepid as you make your way across the last of concrete.

Almost there going back. Reversing to the first although it has never happened, is made then. Unpopulated, breathing, to the nose and to the chest simple as it rises and falls up in between sitting, stitching, gathered solid and weightful to the standing over miles around, but what's underneath and above, the rest complementary to this newness.

Bringing a home to this land, an image in your mind held steady and firm. Bringing something with you on your back and chest, over your shoulders, dripping to envelop the feet you move across the land.

Staying unhidden.

There's no reminding, the slow cascading, the eclipsed fear, the slow burning of a rock. Sealing a house and several years of going away to come back to the room, the wood and the cold, the heat interspersed.

Working long hours for the pleasure of being awake in the dark, turning on no lights, finding no shapes to touch but move through a house unheeded- nothing to bump into except the hard light from a window or two.

The dog sleeping next to the door whom I call in a murmur, who doesn't hear, I call I call, louder: vibration opening larger,

humming and whispering volumes doubling small, I call and wait to see. Turn around. No feeling, I hum in a continuous line. Move forward, walking zigzagging lines, the boy sleeping next to the door.

Playing with your clothes and letting it out through the hard breath. The boy curled on his belly, his mouth open next to the floor.

The boy woken and moving towards me, reaching for my legs and calling me. Next to me as I move around the room, the lines still straight, the windows still allowing the light in, still night, 11:47- the weight of coming to a morning still far and fading, present only in melancholy.

I don't hear the boy. His face tilts, he moves himself over with me, a point smaller helping. He calls me. I say small boy.

I want love for him. The time slow in my hands.

A trip in a car, moving slowly, dawn head tilting parapet, boy small still inside me.

The chest breaks carefully to open itself up for the land.

Walks up from the sea and approaches the house, one shoe coming off, the other foot already bare; putting it down next to the node of the door- a corner, the torso reaching halfway onto the floor sideways, noticing the entrance of a house and stopping there, halfway onto

the floor sideways, the shoe in the node of the wall and the door in the corner.

Rushing past and drying the water, leaving salt in her hair and clothes, the dripping made to expire makes her alone, the absence in her arms.

Love for a child; astringency contained all over in the small parts of the inside.

Push yourself closer to a tight space. Your face careful and slow towards it, wants to appear in light, sees itself in the middle of a migrating sea.

Wakes up on the floor alone. Discovers her head on the wood, the sun invading the room and knows the boy is no longer there.

Walks the land to see what it's made of. Her feet touch the soil where the boy has been lost, now dry and full of ecstasy. The body moves unconscious. The sun is relentless.

There is a tree near the abandoned house. You imagine the boy perched up there, squatting, looking.

You wanted to say something, carrying him.

You wanted to be him, carried.

You're the one swaying, your hands wrapped around the neck.

Those seeds make up the throat; the weight you carry mine.

You love what you carry.

You feel the openness of the dress inflated by the wind of the sea.

Your skin forgets the body it carries: weight one and two become indistinguishable.

It moves up.

You leave a father behind.

The salt crystallizes, tensed upon the skin before the water recedes.

The dress heavier and tugged around your skin makes up for a different smell in your skin, the warmth closer to you.

Your knees bend with him still on your chest, your arms full of absence. The strain filling the joints feels (like) you with purpose.

He looks small- the skin aged but looking younger. The cold from the water is different from his skin. Treat it well, moving through him.

I stand on the door's threshold at the house, the roof needs to be taken out- it's toxic as it is- there's no glass in the window, weeds have interlaced the walls, there are years of dust layered in a sneeze, but I see what it could mean: the making it new and leaving it bare, nothing added, only stripped and taken out; and the waiting for it, wanting for it, seeing what it does, sitting there and making me tender and hard, simple in thoughts, emotion heightened only in itself- no longer sharded.

I understand that it's beside the point and feel the minute elongated in which the time of the season holds still and makes a lifetime of space change to be perceived in just a moment. It creates there.

I'll change the floor to concrete, a sink under the window and a ribbon on the knob.

I'll make her mine.

I'll get a dog and hold him and wash him.

I know it will change.

Entering the space after it's been stripped and made new. Walks towards the sink under the window and leaves her hands under the rush of water coming out of the tap. Looks at them becoming red from the cold and then progressively white. Then washes them with soap, passing one over the other and under, over and over again. Scrubs the skin back to red, straightening. Watches their skin expanding,

thinner and clean, the burning starting to spread. The hands carry her further, pulling, the cleaning moving up onto the forearms, harder.

Remembers Daphne and feels her tightening over her, walking in the same body. The fog low over the sand creating a density hard to feel anywhere other than laid over the chest.

The dog running to the rocks far away from her ahead bringing back his clothes, the black shirt rolled over a pair of jeans and a worn cap.

Pushing the head closer to the indented rock, its bubbly round excrescences in different neutral colors playing her face's skin like him. Lifts her dress over the neck and traps it under the reef. Let's him push her deeper onto the sand and makes the sand something pleasing to taste. Thinks my legs are not my own and sees her chest and her arms and thinks of herself as a mother to the person she is in her body, thinks for the first time that there is something to care for, to treat well and consistently.

Contorts her arms and legs to make them fit in the sink, the tap scraping her, not moving. Her fingers pressing harder.

Comes in from the sea, wraps herself in wool and reaches the kitchen sink where her hands pass through over each other. Her palms turned, looked at, their back, the way they slope caressed by the water instilling another turn.

The pressure of the day's heat slowing down over the land and her moving through it. The wetness of night beginning to fall intermixed with the still evaporating moisture of a land just watered to keep producing. Its alive coming through, then released and welcomed back.

Leaves the kitchen and places herself under the stool near the wood stove. The wool moving with her, then stilled.

A lifetime of washing and dirtying the same hands which grab the new tap's mouth and bring it closer to her own. Looking up, the end of the day's light reminds her of the land outside and shows her to herself there. Moving out, she turns the tap off and pulls the door behind her.

I fall, the knees craving.

Steep into a house. Height oblonged. Announce them out, the things that make you a difference. The heart beats irregularly and too quickly as you rage up. And yet the pressure is low, the head dizzies. You feel denser. Ready to be.

Peeking, your head making the curve of the door.

The constant beeping and needing to drink more and more water. Your body holds it but can't get to it. Maybe that's why you choose to take him to the sea.

Your eyes making the curve.

The knees snap as they tread uphill, craving the ground to which they respond to. They think of being carried in wheels and enjoying the beginning of a new day starting in the direction of the hills. Being driven and feeling the warmth mediated by the glass in the car, they respond to being taken, and not knowing exactly where, makes them young and soft as a child.

Your neck holds before the angle of the door. The pleasure of being placed offering acceptance.

There's no rehydrating a dead body. You're supposed to cover it, wrap it in wool (perhaps to prolong its warmth), but her instinct inclines her to do the opposite. She exposes it as she exposes herself.

It also inclines her to him, her body walking hunched over him, speaking to him, her breath gnawed as a bird on his chest.

Taking care of him. Guarding him- closer to her, recede, making him back, overlap. The wet salt composing them both. Her sitting in the small waves gives him the chance of becoming smaller in her arms.

There's no suitcase to place on the land. To arrive at the land is to come simple.

In fact, it's the same analogous experience: the unwrapping. Leaving your objects at the entrance, you walk burnt by the sun, your skin tightening as it opens and sears. What that does is seal off the continual release stopping and releasing in the patterned body, which is what the scar of the land is.

What you give and what you receive are conjoined in what you become in that land. A flat line containing you, a walk in a straight line across it, a riding up to it: a view of a room as a house that needs to be made new, the rest of it clear except the boy perched in the tree that anchors it.

A mother and a boy on a rock, the boy covering her back, their heads forward, their hair backward.

The mother and the boy lying in the echo of the room, 11:48.

The grown boy you are. Whom you have made with your hands, with your back with your chest that breaks on this land.

The boy you took and loved over, the body you laid in the sea.

The baby you breathed with, living. Were afraid of and are still, only now that's been caressed over by this oval body still pushing out already out of you.

11:49, the baby boy kisses you.

Equilibrium.