

Prayer (4/22/22)

I kneel in the forest

hands digging into earth;

I ask the universe why she left me

as I feel grass bend and break

under my palms.

I ask the universe

how long before I am alive again?

and she says that I already am.

I tell her no, I am not.

If you cannot feel something, does it still exist?

If you never felt something, is it truly there?

The bows of the trees lean towards me,

the ocean laps at my ankles,

saltier than my tears that I cannot taste.

My body aches and breaks

And wonders *why has she forsaken me?*

Benedictions (10/16/22)

I was baptized in shame
and drowned in ash
I pledged myself holy
and bathed my soul in tears
they called it necessary
they called me exceptional
I cannot remember the last time
anyone called me that.
I still want to grow my claws out
I am whole,
crystalline and unholy,
I cleansed myself of dust and ash,
pressing a violet over my heart
I called this thing I inhabit beautiful
and likened it to a fox
who is facing its first poacher

Amara (11/3/22)

I have learned to swallow my pride
swore again and again
that I will force bile back down my throat
I lost my way
but always know the direction
from which I came,
I cannot go back that way
I must move forward
I must make something new from
bile & pride
some god called out to me, this god
told me to let go of my arrogance
this god does not know me
and I do not know it
I have always swallowed my pride
who are you to tell me to let go?
I can't walk in a straight line
I am constantly tripping over my own feet
a creator once called me clumsy
I am just weighed down
by the senseless loss I have swallowed
by the loose tangles of my heart
I let drag by the soles of my shoes
I am made of sunlight and vanity
and some goddess might call me beautiful
I am held by an immovable force
hanging from the rafters of the sky
you are watching me wait
did you call to me?
were you looking for me in the trees?
I left you upside down in a dream, lost
in a forgotten realm,

I will dream again
and you will be this god,
this creator,
this goddess,
and I will spit at your feet.

DNA (3/11/23)

I have my mother's curly hair
and my father's stubborn streak
every piece of myself reminds me of them
and the handprint left behind on the window pane, fingerprints lingering long
after I am gone.

They all act as true reminders.

I have asked why my pain was never sufficient,

I have asked why my hurt isn't enough,

I have asked, I have begged,

I have stepped into their place of worship and tried to love it as they do.

If giving up on them is a lack of love,

is giving up on myself the same?

The shame that has built has no effect on their place of worship,

the temple they call home,

my cries for understanding met with

my father's stubborn streak.

I am selfish. I know what I am.

I know what I must be called in order to let myself linger no more.

If I return to their place of worship,

I do not know what to call myself anymore.

If I return to myself, I lose everything

that has ever made up who I have come to be:

The curl in my hair.

The scrunch of my brow.

The brightness of my life.

The shortness of my temper.

The burden of my tenacity.

I am still so lost for what I am to choose,

and perhaps it is one of those things;

never to choose, never to lose,

but always, always, feel the weight it as acute

as the cross I bear

The Spring of July (7/21/23)

It is the spring of July

I am made of sorrow and honeysuckle and the dramatics of poetry.

It is the spring of July and I am going to cry.

In the spring of July, I choose butterfly clips to go in my hair
and put on mascara to distract from my tiredness

I tell myself July is almost over,

I tell myself that if I make it through tonight,

then tomorrow, then tomorrow's tomorrow,

things will seem as simple as they are in my memory of June

(this is a lie: June felt as July does as August will)

but I will survive tonight.

Tomorrow, in the spirit of July's spring,

I will buy myself something pink or an ice cream or a lovely pen to write poems with.

I will try not to clench my teeth as much

I will listen to Fleetwood Mac and tell myself

That someday I will write something as beautiful as "Landslide".

It is the spring of July,

and really, I don't know what all my fuss is for,

what all the tears are about.

I read my own tarot though I don't even know how,

I read a romance novel and I blush when they kiss,

I sigh and say to myself

how I wish things were simpler,

but I do not even look up at all my simple surroundings and see my hopes realized.

I do not think I will ever be pleased with what I have

but I'm still trying to see it.

In the spring of July, in the heats of August,

in the cool falls of December, and the warming frosts of February,

see the things I have always longed for

and say

oh,

this is what I dreamed of.