

Delineations

I've heard of this thing between rupture and rapture—
the way that veins break like glass animals blown in
a wooden annex, punctured sharp and imprecisely.

The way silicon enters sealed, rigid cylinders, splattering
this sign of orbital celestial bodies, wrapping themselves
around some sort of sun. This thing has a long half-life,

this tendency to see myself in barely-written lines of script
that mention trauma. I don't cry and everyone is surprised.
I've heard of this thing called revelry: the way you can redefine

yourself 1 million times and still want a succulent in a blue bottle.
How I can count 150 unique shades of spine on your bookshelf
but never remember the color of my scrubs in summer '18, my

brain more backseat than steering wheel. There's something poetic
about a second coming that never came, toe-tipping big dipper foot
notes, "*She's a nailbiter, this one*", and that she is, plunging towards

ghostliness with witty digested opacity. She's wrapping it around her
neck, un-noose-like—perhaps like a tie. This is not sadness, but beastly,
permeating dust in a blacked out, star-crusted corner. This is not

guilt, this is layered rock stripped back and peeled, a striped scarf
hanging at the ankles. This is pinnacle—attentive retention. Bound
reaper, wretched thing of wide radius and harmless dripping liquid.

An Almost Opening

If writing is forming or taking
names then someone tell me why
I'm without my own in the month
of February as the trees start to forgive
again and feed their prickled roots
my life is like Orpheus's fractured between
before and after the occasion of looking
back then successive descent of not Eurydice
but someone who looks like her with sheepish
twisting bulging brown eyes and burned feet
branded and caked dirty from Florida concrete
beside the swamp there is incoherence in my
weathered nails there is heaving heat here humidity
harrowing I am waiting for her outline to trace over me
again the faint eclipse at the overlap of a venn diagram
or those chalk outlines of caved-in bodies I hate true-crime
podcast junkies find something else for fascination
or an asinine fix it's time to take a breath of fresh air
I am dead center in the thick of it when my class
discusses a profile of Dylann Roof I decide to think
of my underarm hair or my name or birth-
place the month of February has swept by fast in
swimming tendrils of purpley-pink and as I turn
the final corner I am leaning on the teachings of a fern
named Priscilla and I am her apprentice so I listen
with pointed canine ears and a pocket full of snow.

In Certain Slants of Light

Then, as if chasing us, winter cuts with wind. It's uneasy,
how you hear the sound of your thumb tapping your own
whittled wrist. How you hear four men in a choir of grief.
There is lavender in your latte as you listen to little girls place

lilies of dull orange and mustard yellow. No clouds under
these bitten nails, yet you taste remnants of breeze that strips
away the film over your irises, that flap of clear skin. Loxahatchee
road's got a dark underbelly, but it's just where you first kissed a

girl and smoked pot. If you could fly anywhere, it would be there.
If you could take her anywhere back home, it would be there, since
everywhere else sucks, and she'd think so too. But there, you're
sixteen and studding stars. You can listen to your breath on your

backwards bicycle rise like air in a burning building and wonder
where all the silence went and when it will return. You can converse
with the place you first saw death. You can hold it in the palm
of your hand and wait for the crowing of passing birds. Wait

or not, the crowing will still come, because that's what crowing
is. Just noise, just nature. I'm looking down the barrel of the
one hill in Parkland, Florida, and I can't wait to hurdle down it.
Blind, my ears whistle with a drum, with a shrieking horse, with a baby.