

Kristina Marie Darling

POSTSCRIPTS

I practiced hunger near the church
on West 14th St. when I prayed to you,
a man with white teeth and a crooked brow.
You were the blank face I passed
while driving on a bridge,
but you've nested in my hollows
as pigeons would carve crevices
sleeping cold in every clavicle
and in every bone.

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Your voice bled from my wall's fissures.
I've tried stopping them up, plugging the cracks
and thinking of my deaf grandmother singing,
but nothing's worked. You're a plague
of sticky locusts and my pen's been scratched dry.
Most endings are abrupt.

THE STARS HAVE FORMED THEIR EQUILIBRIUM

The stars have formed their equilibrium
of imperfections & to ellipses that circle
the places abroad it must be
nothing that there are dark hours
among ruins of kitchen tile & the unread
recipes from mother near the stove.

I have taken measure
of your love with a shattered
instrument and was not the first. A fleet
of glass fracture could tell only distance.

I begin to think that there are gravities
other than repetitions charted and observed –
those that have existed
independent of any thought.

When I see you, as I have for the duration
of the flux in February & its forgeries
of warmth, I am absolved of any
destination. Again it becomes the question
of a desecrated place of waiting.
Some things are undone by what is tied to them –
the ashes that linger or glass
unswept even by the wind.

And when all remnants have fled
there is still an awakening near the window –
the slow
realization that there will be only that same
equilibrium where most are left
alone, the few pieces of the sky
that have not drowned in brightness
& tea that is made every morning like this
that undarkens eyes and bears away
any remembrance of the night.

A NOVICE'S GUIDE TO CARTOGRAPHY

The end
of any Monday
leads children to question
the fine print
of beginnings, and you
my daughter, whose freckles misfired
across the synapse
of your skin
ask how it is
that any watch makes its own promises.
I crunch the leaves
with my worn out red heels.
You and I were sure
we wouldn't need to know
the way back home.