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This collection examines, but does not conclusively solve, a battery of problems including but not limited to existential angst, idiopathic exhaustion and unrelenting hopelessness, internal conflicts between sexual orientation and religion, external conflicts regarding sexual orientation and religion, consequent estrangements and emotional difficulties, the phenomenon of viewing the body as separate from the self, the difficulties of fraught relationships with former lovers, the drawing of parallels between the Mother of Christ and the speaker's own mother, and the errant perception of cosmic guidance in the daily activities of chickens. Results are inconclusive. There is no conclusion.

ELECTRIC ANIMAL

by

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For Emma Emory and Chelsea Pierson

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis written by COURTNEY HARTNETT has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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I.

Inertia: Family History

I was seven
there was a telephone pole
and metal like crumpled shining tissue paper

that blew by the backseat window
and we drove by and my dad said that it wasn't the crash
and the glass-shattering halt that killed you but that you kept going brain into skull,
skull into windshield,
windshield into sharp-edged snow
glittering over the asphalt long after the sirens and tow trucks had gone.

I knew what I wanted to be when I grew up.
After that I kept thinking, going headlong past my father's aneurysms
and calcified valves,
my mother's dust-bones, my cousin searching for reflections
in pools of well whiskey, drinking them down, seeing nothing.

I imagined hurtling into rare and spectacular cancers –
the one that wrapped around the spine like the snake on the staff,
spider-legged masses spinning vascularized webs that caught my mother midair,

and I thought of that last inward breath – that momentary cradling of visceral peace
knowing it was there
but that I'd built too much speed to stop.

Bildungsroman

I didn't question
the unknown hollows
of my body, didn't ponder the emptiness
of the rabbit hutch with the rusted wire,
wine glasses turned on their mouths
on the high shelf
I couldn't reach. I built tiny houses
of mud and broken sticks,
each room enough for a sparrow.
I caught the caterpillars
of gypsy moths, watched them spin white
and emerge winged, leaving the torn cocoon.

I came to love
my body that wouldn't bleed,
the blighted ovaries
carrying their strands of south-sea pearls,
understood the calls
of nestless birds, their porous bones lifted
with air, seeking hollowness in another.

Second Sky

This girl gives me a vodka tonic and I keep
stirring it. She's laughing
at something I've said, her face taking on the neon
and shadow of the signs in the window. The music is too loud
and I keep looking past her to where the trees are black veins
in a halogen sky. We talk about the paint curling from the ceiling – its paint continents,
its unpaint oceans. Now
she's leaving. I stay: a pointless inertia,
a stupid kind of distance. Her stride is pressing the ground
between missing floorboards,
her palm flush
with the door, opening
to a rectangle of cricket song
and blue dark: the dark
of the middle of a river. Someone's
scrawled *beautiful*
and didn't hurt on the wall.
The cocktail stirrers drift amidst semicircles
of lemon, bright bitter skin.

Birth of the Body

Had I known then what it was to want
I would not have wanted any of it
the body growing within yours
cell over cell

Not long after it began to pulsate small stars
of cardiac muscle clenching releasing
unsunned skin buried white bone its eyes
saw nothing the body was not yet tired

and finally it broke from the long incision across your belly
like a vernixed bloom was pulled screaming
into a foreign air its legs churning
neither of us could stop it

Citron

You had a dream about an egg opened a glass door to the yellow Styrofoam
I am standing in a stairwell a lemon candy stinging my tongue
 its color at once the color of living and of the dying grasses
of winter I could not tell you the sharpness of it
 and there was an egg with a thin cracked shell
 and this was the one you chose the inside of it pouring itself

into your tired palm your voice beginning to waver like thick bright water you
 asked if you could replace it asking *are you* though the answer is
 something you know and I already am picturing you Sundays
lighting a candle asking *what kind of death*
 as the color carried the heavy light of wet enamel.

Intervention

When one said *I hope you understand*
I can't sit at the same table as you while staring
into the rumpled corner of a stained rug

and another talked about the Vatican as the dog
lapped water and the sound grew louder

and another peeled an orange
with his thumbnails, would not meet my gaze

I slept with the quilt over my closed eyes, sinking
into a shrunken world, the dark microcosm of it

and woke to the sun splintering through the blinds,
floor opening into fissures of light.

The Body as Radiograph

You said you hated how the soft oblong rooms
of your lungs kept filling unfilling
 without your permission and so I told you
how the x-rays had made the bones of the body glow

like vellum lit with white fireflies and ringed in translucent halos
 of muscle ligament and we kept driving
and we laughed at a torn billboard and you rolled up the windows
like you wanted to hold in the sound I knew
you'd dream again of spent casings that my nightmares
would come back like horrible children opening
their blank eyes underground waking the body in a hot swath of pulse

and sweat but for now the road moves under us and there
is a hill so steep that if the brakes give out now
we'll die running red
light after light after light

The Virgin Mary Above the Doors of Our Lady of Grace Church

Holy Mother when I saw you last it was from across
the highway you nested like a stone hawk
in a stone cliff the color of each becoming the other

If I stood farther away
I would no longer see you your body
still vaster than mine hands opening

to a ground you don't touch eyes the faces of sand
colored planets that turn toward me without light

Silver Strand

The whirl of spokes
over pavement and the heavy arms
of conifers filtering sun
into needles of light
and the sound of our laughter
when we could barely see the sky
and the tires slowing in sand
as we drifted into something vaster:

all of it beautiful – the water's
Pacific shimmer, beach
near-empty, the shells
of lifeguard stands like big, hollow-eyed
shorebirds on painted legs. They stood
in pools of parched seaweed where plovers came to rest.

I touched the water – despite
the white-gold sun, its sudden
cold reached deeper than I'd thought possible.
My salt-wet fingers numbed in the wind,
and then the ache
dissipated in the air between us.

The Body as Animus

and somewhere a taut collective of nerve
 asking *what body*

what self what creature is it
that tenses its fingers curling to palms
small bodies kneeling and a gaze from the worn-out couch
unwavering cold in the body there is a blur

of imagining
one-two right hook to the jaw
unmoving against other still bodies

Photosynthesis, Turning

You, a sapling curled
for lack of light toward what it is

 it can touch. Sugar from sun.
Sugar from nothing, from the air

that moves through you almost
without sound. As you sleep,

 I look to the window, the soft moons of streetlights
drawing moths outside.

When you wake it will be slow, and you
will touch your eyelids with the same

 slender hands that will again move
through my body, reaching blindly
for something: not this, not me.

Treating the Chickens for Mites on the Back Porch

When the silked undersides
of feathers become a forest
of small amber teardrop-creatures, I bring
the chickens to the porch. I wear a ripped sweatshirt,
fill the lit ghosts of trash bags
with industrial pesticide strong enough
to kill a cat, but not
the birds with reptilian legs, birds primitive,
their beaks spearlike. The industrial pesticide is flour-soft
and almost innocent when the porch lamp catches it.
The bags swallow the chickens one after another. Their heads
on the outside, they stand still, eyes dark
with sleep. I shake the dust
into their feathers like dry rain. They step
into the henhouse, peppered with neurotoxic snow. They settle.

In the morning you are still gone and the sun
is pouring over a shattered glass of dew. The chickens
step scale-footed outside,
stand blank in the face of dawn.

Dream Sequence

I.

There was a sound of breaking ceramic and a family minus me at a too-small table, and somewhere there was lemonade and my perfume, the one that used to be in the empty bottle I still keep. You sat down across from me at the empty end of the too-small table and nobody looked at me, or you, or me looking across at you. I told you there was a store next to us when you asked what was happening. The store was out of business and I was farewelling the customers with the lemonade and the perfume. It made no sense but you understood, lucid and still, your navy blue dress silhouetting you against the eggshell walls.

II.

The same store with different shelves and different inventory, where I got lost in the aisles, hid in the shelves behind toilet-paper forts. The store is dark and mostly empty. Handwritten signs where the bags of pre-shredded salad lettuce used to be. Industrial, clear bottles of pink-dyed malt liquor in the deli, next to going-out-of-business signs. There's always a crowd. It's impossible to find the doors.

III.

I got dressed and left. There was a quiet room of people, and you. No breaking ceramic, or small table, or stores going out of business. You weren't wearing the blue dress, either. You wore something different, though I can't remember what. You left a note in the room, something inconsequential, something not even for me. Even the penciled arc of your handwriting, confident but with a slight shake, deepens the strange dull ache at the base of my throat. There's a wasp hovering at the window, its body sinister and smooth, black as a Grecian vase. I want to warn you. I don't.

Escapism

Momentarily I have diffused
to the walls but of course in waking

the body is inevitable my restlessness
in its confines I think of ripping it

at imagined seams and like an ingrate
leaving it abandoning its lightless

sinews, myofascia that have carried me uncomplaining
for years, bones the buried

white roots of trees if I could speak
without the body I would tell it *not enough* —

I have asked endlessly what I would look like without it
if I hid it beneath the ground if I stayed there with it.

Catholic Catechism, 2357

Say *intrinsically disordered* say *contrary to the natural law* this is not
something you have felt—
weight of the sacred scripture a weight turned on itself:

could I have answered back with the litany of names
who flung themselves from bridges slipped their faces into the horrible
embrace of ropes were they winged finally
when they left the earth with their feet touching only air
under the rough braided halos?

The Body as Dismembered Doll in Ivy

Tangle of brown hair of oak leaves
 of stems like the legs of spiders what decay what body
 lives in this immortal sort of brokenness what hand is it
that disarticulated unblemished leg from unblemished torso

head pulled like a grape from the vine
 I imagine it years underground
 facing its smooth ankles eyelids still open

Birthrights

My mother said later *you were wanted* —
she told me the story of the silver Jetta,
its rolling into a ditch,
its tin-foil crumpling. At twenty I drove a silver Honda.
The only times I prayed, I asked
that it would swerve senselessly and catapult me
into some uncertain dark.

They took her to a hospital after and searched for a heartbeat,
my heartbeat. They couldn't find it. And then they did.
and years after I tired of the same pulse, its unrelentingness.

In the baby picture I remember, my mother is still on the operating table
and I am screaming and smeared red. She said my crown of bruises
dissipated in hours. When I swam in the crowdless pool
in waning summer, I flattened myself to the bottom
until my legs went weak. I always pushed upward
in the end, clear membrane of water
breaking over my upturned face before the reluctant inhale.

II.

Confiteor

The first time I fucked
a woman with a crucifix around
my neck, it felt like
sacrilege. After, I looked
in the mirror and saw the thin river
of chain, the body of Christ
glossed in sweat and 14 karat gold.
I stared into the eye-glint of the cross.

When she had gone
to light a cigarette
on the front porch,
I stood in the white curtained room
of the shower, heard *wash away my iniquity cleanse me*
from my sin in the quiet steaming air, remembered
the voice of the parish priest
as my child-hands held holy water
in a shallow silver pan beside the altar,

but her hands shone with seven stars
and the two mouths
saying *touch Me and see,*
for a spirit does not have flesh
and bones *as you see that I have.*

Chroma Kaleidoscope

In the aisle seat of a Greyhound bus there is a man
who has seen the colors of souls:
through the thick lens
of peyote, they flicker beneath rib-slats.
I have given myself permission
to believe him. *Yours*
would be a different color
than mine, he says.
I want to ask what color
and then don't.
I am wondering if the colors
of souls change over time.
Once, I watched
my mother's shadow stretch
and curl itself, covering everything,
then leaving it.
I stood where she had, turning
the ground the same darker shade. I looked
at our shadows and the light between them.
The man is going from Mississippi
to New York. We drink
from my flask when the bus arrives in time
for the transfer, and the liquor is colorless
and sears under my sternum. In the terminal,
a mother slaps her small daughter
and the child wails, steps closer.

The New World

Before anyone
knew anything
else, the earth
was a plate
afloat
in nothing.
Bone china
on blue, concentric
circles caging its sides,
dark detail
of flowers
rippling its center.

If we wanted
an end
we'd find it —
wooden vessels reaching
the plate's edge
and falling into
dead space,
taut sails
collapsing
like lungs.

Until someone
tried,
and we found
ourselves instead
afloat
in the albumen
beneath a cold shell
nobody could touch.

It's interminable now.
The trees are still
with leaves burnished
on the bend
and rise of the hill,
the slow
hurtling arc of the world.

The Body as New Calendar Year

And how many years until knees can no longer stop their sounds
of the tectonics of cartilage the wearing of plate edges
this slower erosion

and the body will not regenerate itself
but continue collecting memories of severance
the calloused bone that resorbs slowly
more slowly

and the interminable dervish turns
of the hands of clocks that have taunted
the body for years

and is it too much to stand in the empty room its floor sweet
with spilled champagne and wait for that bleak horizon

Almost-Elegy

A drunk jumped in front of your car
and you said he'd been running
into the street all day — layer on layer
of some ache he'd lost the words for —
and when I walked
through the lit grid of the intersection
something was changed:
the soft gravity like a gypsy moth to lamplight.
How is it that I pull anything
toward the space of my wanting? There is a dream
where I close my eyes in front of a train
and open them in the inside of a blue china bowl
and there are yellow numbers adrift
 like fireflies. I think *regret has a taste*
 like burnt cinnamon,
and the quiet is terrible, my hands outstretched to trace
the bowl's stinging contours, the irreparable architecture of loss.
I didn't understand
the phrase *need gone* until I heard it spoken,
two syllables like the tapping of fingernails on a veneered desk,
the man's footsteps on asphalt, a crescendo
of *need gone* the exhale when the car stopped short.

The Virgin Mary Survives the Storm

Holy Mother when the tornado leveled our school on a Sunday night
and no one was there to be hurt our mother called it a miracle
or a blessing or maybe said nothing but we all knew

I stared into the television and I saw my little brother's

classroom steel beams collapsed where his desk had been. When we stood before
the rubble I saw your statue outside where the doors were once your one

hand missing the other extending toward me as if in giving alms your
insides white particulate with the same dust that covered

the bricks the soles of my shoes the body
of the building like a gutted animal broken
and angular the slow arc of your sunbleached back

Ending

You asked *what is it like* and I told you
Sometimes it's just enough
to move through the aisles
of a grocery store without disintegrating.
I told you to think of lurching
through new red lights, a manic kind of hopelessness.
I told you to think about the threadless spools
of wheels spinning dust and air.

I wanted to tell you
in Norse myth, something horrible
is chained. I wanted
to ask *how does anyone live*
with that sort of terror, anyway
but at the end the chain breaks, and everything
is destroyed— the gods, all of it.
Mornings, light skewers
the prescription vials on my desk.
In another Norse legend, a wolf swallows the sun.

Questions for God

Have I grown smaller, frailer because I am faithless
 every part of me has become empty:
wanting something and never knowing what an acute kind of longing
 sharp but inarticulate why is it that when I say your name
I hear no answer I have watched the wings of birds for years.

Soapstone

You write to me about the whir
of diamond-tipped saws
in a cold quarry. You wear masks,
goggles, but the dust
always finds its way through – a fine
white snow clouding your lungs, covering
your body until you're moving white marble.
I didn't like how it brought out the lines in my face, you said.
Then I was too tired to care. You slept,
dreamed the violinist touched you
through a kind of numbness.
Some days, you look in on her,
the lines in her face.
You hope she is dead
because she wants so badly
to be dead. You tell her
to eat. Her skin is like paper. Her jewelry,
her expensive clothes – all of it
untouched. Some days
she can barely stand. You tell me
about the sound of the saws,
an incredible noise. I picture them
mutilating the white faces
of rock. *You can find a saw to cut*
anything, you tell me. Perpetual bodies
of stones – these
of all things I'd thought were safe.

Epistolary

How to explain the color
of sound to a woman who is deaf. How to capture
the contours of a room
for the blind woman, who cannot know them
without touch— when you said my body

had forsaken the Lord, and maybe you, too,
I felt that there was something broken,
though I couldn't say what, or where.

*

Do you know that when I stand in the lurid glow
of a barroom light, talking to a woman whose name I will not remember
or maybe never knew, I hope her voice will be the one
that erases yours? This is why
I stand staring at clocks willing the sharp hands
back, though I know they can never know how.

Genesis

And on our seventh day I wake to smoke tangling itself
in the air above your lips and the salt sting of tequila
on the bedside table and I convince myself that it takes only so many things

to make heaven I imagine myself
pressing into your wood floors
the knots and whorls burning themselves into my fingertips
my body feeling the weight of the soft soles
of your feet in the wet heat of summer

until I remember that no amount of wanting
can make illusion whole that the body's ache
does not heal its emptiness
that I will pull myself from the floor, shoulders sticking
with sweat, that the air in your throat
will push outward despite itself
toward something distant and invisible.

The Body as Cotard's Delusion

Already the body has forgotten itself
in a house with a roof strung in lights
and the back porch with its colony
of lemon balm mint tiny rosebushes
rooted in soil soil in pots
the pots moveable the plants unaware
that the body has become a telegram
ricocheting along the lone thread of wire
its arms have become unseeable
its water-bones, its skin like air
transfiguring itself to weightlessness
to small fractions of sky

Elegy for M.M.T., 1990-2007

All I knew: you, a rifle, woods.
At your funeral, no one found the right words, my
I'm so sorry to your father falling
like a bad punch line. Your eulogies mentioned hot peppers,
green eyes. After,
I dreamed I was you, suspended
in silent blue space, yellow numbers
surrounding like stars. An overwhelming
I'm so sorry – the me that was you
knew it was irrevocable, and I woke
steeped in regret. I committed
your too-short obituary to memory. For months
there were questions, always asked
in a kind of hush. No note. At your funeral,
I stared unbelieving
at the little box of ash
that was you. Its sides were etched
in the outlines of trees, their empty branches
small hands: perfect, still.

There is a Wildness in My Want of Answer

When I ask if there is a God—
a wildness and also an incredible fear

the feeling of cradling a telephone as it rings endlessly
the ringing has made itself the sound of cicadas
sinking into everything becoming part of all of it

I cannot imagine its stopping
falling into a silence like winter I cannot take

the answer I cannot hear any answer no matter the words that carry it.

III.

The Body as Trail Run

Having learned early utopia only translates to *nowhere*
the body moves forward endless over packed ground

over roots scarred deep enough to see the white fibers of their cores
over wooded hills through the churned red clay after rain
each wave of its exhaustion is not enough to stop

the desperation in the unending arc of earth
its impact rattling against the sinewed web
of metatarsals the almost hourglass of tibia
which looks for weightlessness
in the short silence between strides

Epistle

When I leave you there will be
no sound, only
the deep heat
of ocean rifts, a heat that dissipates
in the cold sea around
and over it, though it pulses constant,
in its dark confluence of liquid
and sands pulled from shore.

Your saltwater sweat
enough to sting a wound: to rest
in the blood-metal parting
of a skin that will forget you, and seal itself.

There is nothing
you need to say. Whatever ache
you leave adrift
in the chilled tide of your absence
is enough.

Listening to the Jonestown Death Tapes

A voice through a microphone says *hurry my children hurry*
and then there's the slow rise
of tidal sound, at first
unrecognizable, and it takes
until its first charged lull
to understand it's screaming.

The voice is the kind that could coax a scared horse onto a trailer:
Quickly quickly quickly quickly quickly.
A child shrieks.

This world's not our home

*assure these children
of the relaxation of stepping over to the next plane*

There is music playing softly, an exhalation of almost-harmony.

take our life from us,
Someone is singing.

we lay it down,
A faint discordance of sighs.

we got tired.

A shimmering of static. The tape rattles, runs out.

The Body Mid-River

It is not until the center of the swim that the body realizes
the salt in its eyes the futility of stroke
after stroke it thinks only of the softness
of the mud at the river's floor softer than silk velvet
how no more than a long exhale separates it from rest

Someone dredged this river once it was years ago
found a bicycle the front wall of a mobile home
two bodies like this one lungs heavy with the water's polluted churn
I did not ask how they landed or the speed of their sinking
that gradual cold gradual dark

Before Leaving

And what is an ending if not a severance— a slow
sharp parting to the tired sides of knives
or oceans, and I am saying I will miss the mountains,
their blue-shrouded tops vague enough to make into anything
I would want. Is it the plains and their desolation
that have turned me afraid —
like the flattened bowl of belly between iliac crests
or the sound of your words swallowed in air?

This is not something I have told you—
not a question you could answer.

The Body as Seizure

In its static dreaming the body sees a city
 white buildings floating red orbs stippling sky

sees a swirl of deep loam pockmarked with yellow jewels
 of eyes hears a scream where there is no scream

but only mute terror finger-prickle
 over its head vision blurring into sudden light
in the body's waking the spine presses to floor
 the room finds color again finds sound

its eyes are open unrelenting
 wanting the worldless collapse
to be for another moment falling to anesthetic dark

Freya Roams the Nine Worlds

Proximity alone drew you together
you said, and my mother told me once

that it was the moon that pulled the tide
to shore, though the tide

didn't know it. I imagined the ocean itself lost
and spilling flat and mirrored on the coast,

its rivulets fingers, blind
with the lightless sky. The moon circling

some foreign planet, still far
from its indifferent surface.

I have no pictures of you.
When I walk past the dark jetties

hemming the uncertain body
of the Atlantic, the stones begin

to take on the shape
of your hipbones, knife-edges opening
to the water even as they channel it home.

The Virgin Mary Stands in the Hamilton Window of St. Ignatius Chapel Point

Holy Mother when the sun rose
and filled you with light your cloak was bluer than any river
sky behind you striated with storm then your soft halo edged

in black the heart radiant bare
shot through with roots but nothing like earth
the impassive eyes nose aquiline
face a quarter in shadow

the blue cloak draping the red surge of your robe
and your feet grounded
I did not know if you stood on rock or cloud

After Hearing Nothing for Months, I Remember When You Went Skydiving

Because I've almost forgotten the exact
sound that your voice makes
in open air the memory is silent
your body lifted into blank sky and this was not something
I had ever wanted – looking in
on the world from a safe distance but I wondered
if it was lonely seeing the cars swim the highways
like bright silent fish you said later
there was a kind of thrill to it that I wouldn't understand
with the parched grass cradling my feet
but I watched you in that wild helplessness
 of slipping through a fingerless sky, your body hurtling both towards nothing
 and towards me
 the fall slowing at its end with only earth to catch you.

Two Trees

Arbor vitae, meaning *tree of life*:
rooted in the sagittal section
of sheep's brain –
little cerebellum and
white-matter trunk,
white branches tucked within it.
The branches bare, as in winter.

Another, in the Kaballah – perfect
orbs suspended, tied
to the ceiling, to each other.
Tattooed in the characters of a language
whose characters were indecipherable.

Its intricacy mesmerized: no roots,
no reaching branches. The strings
between spheres held like taut sinews
with no need for beginning or end.

Yours a galaxy, stretch of strange planets
holding each other aloft.
Mine a single, irreversible cut.

Bike Lane Pastoral

I meant to tell you all of it:
whir of wheels
over asphalt, sun
on my hands, ribbon-bodies
of horses in the fields
at half-light. I'm not
a part of it, not now – *the old feeling*
was something I read once and I thought
it meant nostalgia,
but when I say it I mean
this, the futility of wet gunpowder,
the dark weight of it, the gravity slowing
the spinning of spokes uphill, the gravity
spinning the spokes downhill. Once at dusk
the flooded ground was foil
stuck through with toothpick-trunks
of trees. I meant to tell you
but I forgot it in looking
for potholes, for the ruined prisms
of glass in the street. I am looking
too long at my watch on the road-shivered handlebars, waiting
for the time and the trees
to blur by, for the sun to set
before I'm far enough to be lost.

The Body as Ruined Animal

The sky the body move over rough bones of railroad tracks
unending ribs in the torso of autumn
a train moving forward slowly beneath the red leaves poised
 for collapse the body does not leave the tracks
 it turns to the engine wanting something
 the animal of it does not know what
 it closes its eyes to the rush of light

Elegy

Strike of living, strike of dying –
the sting of both, unexpected –
when it was you who somehow stirred
what futility I saw
and then I stirred it further,
and its legs strengthened,
and it walked on –
this was life. Was miracle.
When it vanished particulate,
I made this a part of the story –
to connect each point
was to make line, or reason.
However it turned, or plunged –
part of the narrative
I did not question,
and when it stopped at a point
in empty space
I stared into its ending
as if to make sense of it,
and could not.

The Body as Erasure

How it has come to feel a pain with the start
of morning sun breaking
like a white ocean around the trees
the blades of birds' wings too sharp for waking I stare at its face in the mirror
its tired angles of mandible that loathe to open for breath or prayer

I am constantly speaking to no one
saying in a month in a week in a moment half of it will leave me

in waking alongside the window I feel the beginnings of light
the contours of the reluctant whole

NOTES

1. “Theology of the Body” contains excerpts from the Catholic Catechism. These were sourced from

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2357-8. *Vatican.va*. The Holy See., n.d. Web.
07 Mar 2015.
2. “Silver Strand” is a poem for my mother, and refers to the beach in Coronado, CA.
3. “Earth as Seizure” was inspired in part by Katie Ford’s poem “Last Breath Underneath” from her collection *Deposition* (Saint Paul: Graywolf, 2002).
4. The title of “Catholic Catechism, 2357” includes a reference number to a portion of the document that addresses the Church’s moral stance on homosexuality. It was sourced from

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2357. *Vatican.va*. The Holy See., n.d. Web. 07 Mar 2015.
5. Jim Whiteside is partially responsible for the inspiration behind “The Body as Dismembered Doll in Ivy.” This poem is for him.
6. “Confiteor” contains an excerpt from the Catholic Mass and allusions to and/or quotes from Revelation 1:16, 1:17 and Luke 24:49. These were sourced from

"12 Bible Verses About Christ’s Hands." *Knowing-Jesus.com*. Knowing Jesus, n.d. Web.
07 Mar. 2015.
7. “Chroma Kaleidoscope” is for Tom on the Greyhound.
8. “The Virgin Mary Survives the Storm” references the destruction by tornado of Archbishop Neale School in La Plate, MD on April 28, 2002.
9. “Soapstone” is for Emma Emory.
10. “The Virgin Mary Stands in a Moon on a Chain” references a Miraculous Medal given to me by my mother.
11. “Elegy for M.M.T., 1990-2000” is dedicated to the memory of Maggie May Tripp.

12. “Freya Roams the Nine Worlds” was informed in part by

“Freya.” *Norse-mythology.org*. Norse Mythology for Smart People. n.d. Web. 27 Mar 2015.

13. “Two Trees” is for Coleen Childres.

14. “Elegy” is dedicated to the memory of Claudia Emerson.