

1ST PLACE

P262

the loophole, or, how the sky ignores us

we watch you

through the loophole

where the meaning seeps away

we never make it to the page

but pages are still missing

you became the animal

we thought thought

you sang in silence and grew so tall

your first light above the horizon

the last known unknown

we can be certain of

\*\*\*

where Chiron goes

the opportunity waves goodbye

from this one single healing

which of course requires

nowhere and is nothing

but a change in the humid heart

where no future is happier

or could care less

than the one we planned to fence

\* \* \*

how many cats are you

your Zen is the new me

I aspire to be as still as your death

without it

there is nothing but nothing

even desire causes no pain,

uneven desire is beautiful

where we fade

there my angel digs a hole

to fill a hole

out of bounds, the stars

and the star struck

wade in and out, the night

is alone and humble alone

small footsteps arrive

somewhere else and here

is nothing but nothing but

\* \* \*

**The one who went away**

I turn the stone in my head,

there is your room and there on the bed you sit

in a light that does not shift

you rise and rise again, never noticing

the dust or the room or the way I keep coming

though never coming in.

A stone cannot be moved from itself

and the light comes from a time without hours.

Perhaps you are the one who went away

and it was I who waited in that room

high above the expectations of ordinary days.

\* \* \*

**epiphany**

how long does it take

to fly in a circle

\* \* \*

## Summer is broken

This summer is broken,  
what a poor vulture I have become,  
what a cloud, what a sun  
and just like you always  
you're drowning again,

so I compromise,  
I'll resurface in your  
unfinished business if  
that's where summers matter,  
a fig and a peach now  
*the fig and the peach,*

which summer was *just* a summer  
and which death was only a death?

The sun sets on a dry sea,  
a shore doubts  
it was ever touched.

\* \* \*

**I want to remove my masks and costumes**

I want to remove my masks and costumes,

every day thumb to the right page

to explain what the knowledge does not,

I want the four walls to stop counting

just because I have been counting them,

the corners, the doors, and yes myself makes an even ten,

Small prints, the paw of a cancer

and the famine I forgot, is forgetting then fatful?

I eat the decorations, take off one leaf

and there is another but the modesty is gone,

the music has ended as your mouth falls open

at my face, my whirling.

\* \* \*

**It becomes hot, it freezes**

After your new leaves arrived

mostly on a Sunday

crows kept sitting on the one

piece of time that would not go away,

huge cocoons in the trees

clutched expectation, would we reform?

Remember the daisies

we cut in your last dream

still wilt on your tongue,

not even fresh water revives a murder.

I keep killing

I keep the garden intact

if you faded to this

every river and every day

I climb down for the black

unshifting stones

you threw from your eyes.

\* \* \*

**those things**

what are those things you are

by the grave of last impressions

the bird that can't cry

though there is no now like now

those things you tied together

in the last single hour

with that musty clock  
and the tapping of some god's  
finger on your head  
enough to break a petal from its neck

that thing you carried  
(and you were amazing)  
the cage with a need for only you  
when you opened it  
the exclamation cloud  
dripped a black sleep on my pillow

its poison stopped the little hand  
that hammered on the door  
it was blood shut for a dreamy carriage  
a marathon of absence  
will cure us both

consequences became you  
and I held my hands each day

until the flowers died

I ate the mountains I climbed

with no tongue on which to place

the flags of my conquest

the miracles melted in my jaw

what are those things you become

away from this and always

with your skin in a bag

and your heart no longer a heart

we meet between the wheels

alive and not alive

where there is nothing to give

that cannot be dead and beautiful tied