

Ribs of Satin, Mouth of Dusk

- I. Father, Persephone's pomegranates fell out of my mouth
as I came to you asking for the equivalent of ease
and you said the music that played then paralyzes now
- II. I, too, have turned feral, turned teeth on teeth,
you, too, have sipped Dionysus's wine straight outta dusk's collarbone
- III. At the entrance of what was once my birthplace, you sat threadbare
and mourned the quietness of quilted beds and
you said to resent only the acts of kindness
that sound like D.H. Lawrence's Self-Pity.
- IV. Needled my way through the days
bones bearing a famine yet to come,
O how Father's hand glistened when I spoke of sin
- V. The sheer injustice of pen on paper
The nouveau literariness of English on my tongue
"I never saw a wild thing sorry for itself."
- VI. Father's mosaiced litanies, the way he raised me, like hands to
the sky,
Undo all my attempts at non-repentance
- VII. An oasis of *oh no*, of father is no longer Father, just another man
who could not love my fading out
- VIII. For after all,
What is a daughter but a splinter, a hereditary haemorrhage?
- IX. God as coxer of crude confessions; God as the distance between
me and the first time I excused myself, drank & drank in
the absences of Jannah
- X. There was that one time, though, when you taught me how
to spell Mediterranean and I asked whether inheriting
your religion meant I could no longer languish the myths
of the Greek

XI. You said I still could.

XII. Father,
How could you not have noticed the teething

XIII. How there was that other time, when I placed an offering at
your feet, whisper-yelled:
let me be
your debutante
and I'll let you hold my body like a grudge.

XIV. Be still, you said, the prayer that played then paralyzes now.

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