

Black Lies

Some women should live alone.
October is a month for drifting off course,
midnight suitcases and taxis, streetlamps define
the last chance road. Divorce is a destination
resort and they take it, like a gift, a lottery ticket.
The last bridge and they dynamite it.

Some women refuse starving, the obligatory dinner
pantomime, moving food across china,
acts of mime and camouflage.
She spends days nauseous and dizzy,
still a size two. She could fit her wedding dress
with ease. The problem is the vow.
She won't marry again.
Plans his funeral instead, guest list and floral arrangements.
She's insomniac, smokes in secret, adds assets
and how she'll spend his life insurance.
A cruise to Mozambique, Sicily and Bali.

She's exhausted by the intricacies of ballet
recitals and soccer practice, the PTA carnival
gold fish toss and cookie sale.
Confrontationally listless renditions of Chopin
banged out by punitive thirteen year old hands.
Her daughter has ten thousand words for no.
She wants to knock her teeth out, a small
demonstration of the varieties of ivory.
Subvert the text and stitches are next.
Does the Geneva Convention protect adolescence?
It's a contamination in a no-fly zone.
She's building weapons, believe me.
Beethoven too boring, again, darling?
Then try it with your jaw wired.

In this autumn the yellow of prophecy
arrogance and vengeance are insignificant.
A storm front is rushing east, delirious,
ripping maples with the sound of an ocean.
Charged air, molecules with razor edges.
They make the forest bleed.
Soon the ritual mutilation of pumpkins.
Then the slaughter of baby pines.

This is no mid-life crisis, no new flu.
She never wanted a human life.
Too many ribbons and dental appointments,
the van for ski team and volley ball club.

Her wedding band is a metal tourniquet.
She can't place her face, couldn't pick herself
out of a line-up, says it's a stress headache,
I'm fine. Just incipient gangrene of the left hand
and the tension of not putting a 9 millimeter
hollow-point bullet in your brain.

And let's not do the roof this year.
That's right, dear. Let's just let it rain.