

BEFORE THE BODY

What comes before

The body's rising?

An unnamable distance

Having been born alone

Having made the journey through blood on my own

I want to say it was love

my mother and father

What drove their bodies

to create another

I grasp for knowing and pull back

A chaotic wind, its unruly air

What was before, before?

In the beginning I had no name to carry

The weight of death

my father left formless

The body's rough science attempts to fill in the gaps

An attempt to lift shame

stuck in the body's craw to reach back to a beginning

I try to re-member

that which cannot be re-membered

Fracture living up to its name

What comes before, before?

I settle on love or something greater than the sum of loss

The potential of will The body's rising

a living testament

The strange spell of knowing, its faceless want

to chart those unknowable places

Its cartography of flesh that brings me closest to

the untouched terrain of the body's rising

what comes before, before.

BESTIARY

I am a child turned outside itself
turned animal feeding past fed—
something inside me won't sleep.
Its own burrowing, time and again a splitting
spilling into the yolk of another
in that bestiary, its fear magnified
endured at the pith of terror
something turned wet at the nostril
how else does one become prey
at the hand of insatiability—
that first hunger that destroyed
my girl body, its fauna
his forked tongue
stilled every muscle—

Extinction stings at my eyes & I am
the starved, a hunger warms my blood.
Some small animal gnaws to the rhythm of
a restlessness in this body's wilderness
mourning its relentless wild run savage
an act of witness or what
a body Othered becomes:
a foamed mouth, starving past starved
the sustenance of larger beasts turned
at the site of a mercy, my girl memory &
a man turned on his belly, beckoning me
a caught thing trembling against
a slick, scaled pulsing
underneath the flesh, undone.

TRANSMOGRIFICATION

is to emerge from the eye

of a man's hunger

quadrupedal & measured

self untethered

from the self

to have no memory of the happening

is a wilderness

a wildness struck in my blood

is to become a child gone feral

in the night

of a man's primal urge

violation: its black expanse

star mapped

constellation of a man's bruising

is this the site of metamorphosis?

What turned myself

outside

myself?