

The Return

yes, I have known pain.

I have been blindfolded and numbed.
my ribs taken from me, used as logs
while I have been forced to give my breath
to cast a flame.

yes, I have watched from above
as my ache and anguish were surrendered to smoke.
my smile has chipped away
till every last piece
became ash.

yes, I have been hollowed out.
my words taken deep from my belly
with jagged-edge knife and dull ladle,
leaving me with a vast
nothing to say.

and yes, I have danced on pins and needles
that I alone scattered across the floor.
I hoped to stand atop each and every point,
poised.

I believed that a hundred wounds left barely bleeding,
could one day feel tender.

yes, pain has come,
bending my body this way,
and that way,
leaving my head and heart
raw and splintered.

But my spirit has been left to soar.

yes, I have yet to see her,
she who is not mine,
who knows her mother,
who loves her mother and melts into her skin—
infinite sky
and immeasurable ocean.

She carries my body's memories

and bathes them in evening light.

yes, I am the flesh
born of her flight,
singing the song of the crashing wave,
made of sand rushing back to sea.

yes, I have known pain,
but the she beyond herself,
who turns tethers into honey and tears into morning dew,
she has returned it to me.