

Three Poems

Audrey Tumberg

Grasping at a Fate Not Yet Held

Last night in muggy covers
I dreamt I touched your side.

While the fan was droning on in the corner,
my shaky hand found its way
two fingers below your last rib.

Soft to the smell,
 warm to the touch,
 real to the mind.

Last night in humid air,
I pictured you turning to me
through a lens of spotted starlight.

Smooth skin on wrinkled white linen.
Glinting auburn hair shifting on static filled pillowcases.

Muddy eyes finding my line of sight.

Easy on the eyes,
enticing to the heart,
enough for the hopeful.

Last night in a feverish sweat,
I felt you
right
there
on the tip of my tongue.

Your fingertips placing pressure on my palate.
My tastebuds forming around you.
My mouth trying to cradle your taste.
Your knuckles pressing down harder.

Cold enough to startle,
Waxy enough to feel like a figment,
Fictitious enough to snap glued eyes open.

Last night in a flushed moment of living open truth,
I called out your name.

I let it echo.

Stretched syllables stuttering,
crammed consonants catching.
Out of luck to spend.

Before | After

Before

Inches of thick sweet air between
Perfumed with swiveling scent of hesitancy
Heavy with the weight of need

Nose to nose sharp and soft
Close enough to see the light glint off the whites of your eyes
The bright flashes near enough to catch and release

Is there a way to use my pupils to tell you
I've been angling to play for keeps?

Hands patiently sifting through sandy features
Speckled freckles, soft lines, open pores

Hard pressed for air gasping
For the life of your breath in my open mouth

Sharp lines of teeth close enough to bite my own tongue for me
Honey coated words behind sealed lips
Drumming in my pulse droning in my jaw

Messy dripping words with the instinct to coat
The ridges of your spine and the rift of your top lip

After

Let me steady myself on the taste of your sweet skin
On burning lips fevers exchanged
Fire given by a sweet hand
My balance remade

Let me steady myself in the spaces in-between
Between sweaty palms
That have held delicate matters
Between cut up fingers
That have grazed warm flushed faces
My balance remade

Steady is the fuzzy light
Flickering outside both peripherals
Humming is the warm space between us
Telling are my own features made unfamiliar
How my mouth has changed
From your fingertips grazing it

How all the times
I've mulled your syllables over on my tongue
Render the peaks and valleys that trace my lips
To have the sharp lines and smooth flares
Of your name
Written all around them
Myself remade

Audrey Tumberg is a junior in the English program at UND. Audrey hopes to continue her passion of the literary scene through a career in editing and publishing. In her spare time, Audrey enjoys listening to music, people watching, and reading. You can often find Audrey downtown getting a cup of coffee and scribbling down new ideas for poems.