**Ode to My Mothers’ Swearing**

Words have power,

don’t you know?

Slipping from a matriarch’s mouth:

quick to fill the air,

with fresh vulgarity,

freezing the world with their punch

*Did she just say--?*

*Did she just* cuss*--?*

*Did she just break the very rule she placed on us--*

*and with such gumption,*

*such practice?*

I didn’t know mommies could command

such prowess in the sailors’ tongue

We all move differently;

watch her lips with renewed respect.

When will I command such respect

from the swears I conjure?

When can I fill the air

like her perfume on the summer's breeze

with the caustic mysticism that is the words I’ve been denied?

Shaping my tongue,

moving my jaw,

opening my soul to the song of curses:

spitting them into the air in rapid succession,

weaving them in like a stitch in a tapestry,

dropping them like pennies from my pocket,

waiting for someone to pick up on them…

mildly indifferent,

inconvenienced,

amused.

Let me measure up to all my mothers

Talents: including the driving of her words home.

Colorblind Rage

It isn’t fair that my anger is so cliche

a caged tiger one day and a storm the next

something this old shouldn’t hurt this bad

it shouldn’t hurt at all because you tell me

You don’t want me

to be swallowed up by my anger

but my throat is so full of hate I can’t

even pretend to promise you it won’t

I am god created

I will not deign to say my rage is righteous

but it is full of self

Yours

There was a time I would brag about the fact that you chose me.

Picked me out like the perfect berry.

Wanted me like the sun in a storm.

Found me like I was always waiting for you,

and brought me home.

There is something poetic in the surety of that thought.

The love that I share with you--the Roo to your Kanga and

the power of your arms holding me tight as our very beings would sing,

“One of these things is not like the other”

That is why it is so cruel what age took from me.

That it stole my glasses,

tugged on my hair, forced my head up.

Until I was forced to look--

look up to something that wasn’t you.

It isn’t fair that we argue about how much chance played

in our love story. We argue about whether god gambled with me on the line

but we never argue how gladly you bet.

Help Me

Blessed are the peacemakers--

and those that hold them back.

Their reasons that they must clamp shut gnashing teeth

and offer toothy smiles.

God bless the peacemakers!

And bless them again for the moments they want chaos,

bless their hands, with their power to uncurl fists, when they long to throw the first blow.

Bless me dear Lord

for the lack of peace inside me.

I have sewn peace so often that my hands bleed from holding the needle.

Why is it when I make something it is so often given away?

Bless me.

Bless me.

Bless me.

Talents

How many talents fit into my hand

When I reached into the sack

of God’s gifts and grasped

at my potential?

How many talents fit into a hand?

When I reached deep

Into a divine sack

and grasped at my potential?

Was it with keen eyes

I picked at the large coins and jewels?

Or clawing little hands

scrambling for any scraps left at the bottom,

hoping to sweeten my existence,

hustling to be of use

to a mortal family unmet

and show a prowess from a time none of us can remember.

Or, for, once,

was I content

that I could reach the sack at all.

Branches

My family tree

fell by histories axe,

like my ancestors sunk to the bottom of the sea.

Somewhere, their phantom branches still reach

for the unforgiving sun.

I am their wilted tree stump.

The last of an unknown family tree

names unmarked and faces lost to times axe.

Withered and forced to return to a place the unknown are forced to wait.

The product of strong roots and insistent survival,

the tree that will never forget but

the stump that is denied the light for lack of branches.

I am gifted with the unseen gifts

and well seen burdens.

I do not know the kind of tree I am--

the number of rings that adorn me but,

I flourish.

For myself and for the hope I inspire

I will fill in the branches again.

Teach me Guide me

They ask why I am tired.

I wonder if it is

the depression of the future or

the abandonment of the past hanging off

my shoulders.

When I look in the mirror, I see features

borrowed from the faces of unknown ancestors.

A gift entrusted to me as proof of survival.

The reminder that living through a gift is

Still another thing to be carried on the journey.

I walk their path, one version of one ancestor’s dream.

Tired and headed to that long forgotten home.

Will I be remembered? Or one day,

Just as before, be some long forgotten entity

adding my own burden of exhaustion on those

After me…

When I die will I know the faces

Of those there to welcome me?

Wishes

I wish during the quietest moments

That I was a storm--

A storm loud enough to let my screams

Echo against the mountains--

My wails would whip the trees and

I would feel nothing but the release

As I floated over the largest of hurdles

There is a charm in a girl wishing

To be a storm.

A certain magic unable to tip into realization,

The curse of commonality that hangs heavy

In the feminine soul.

I say I wish I was a storm

So I can bask in the humanity denied me.

Grasping hands at the magic I’m told

I possess.

No one owns a storm

But they name the largest ones after women

so they’re easier to blame

Human

I have seen God.

His walk in the crowds, groupings of strangers

Ever moving, everywhere.

Ever knowing in the micro, macro selfishness

Of humanity.

I have seen God.

His voice among the protests--

Oneness in chaotic melody.

Singing in despair as time wears us.

Wailing out the praise of people ever changing.

I have seen God

As he invites me to know him

Feasting upon the knowledge he has grown

And...

I balked at the truth there.

I have seen God in humanity

But I resisted the humanity in God.

Worth

How might I rent salvation for my love?

Who can I bribe with my soul as collateral

to share my eternity with him?

Why give me one of your precious lilies now only to tell me it is not of your garden?

I offer him your succor and he ignores it to hold my hands.

I keep your words on my lips and he kisses around them.

I settle on my knees before you and he tries to explain I should kneel for no one.

How then do I rent my loves salvation

and what price will you take?

I already have a breaking heart,

my spirit is contrite to have strayed out of the fold at all.

Who can I bribe that will have mercy on my heart

and keep our eternities intertwined for longer than just on earth.

Big Brother

Long before being introduced,

we knew each other.

You shaped a small intelligence

molded a heart too big,

hair too curly,

curiosity too powerful and you sent her out with your love.

She learned to love you again and again,

learned to love others,

slowly learns to love herself.

Which satisfies the creator more:

the sculpting

or

knowing the vessel is finally loved?