

Origin

My hometown.
Every corner of every street
Holds a memory for me.
A pair of shoes hanging from the sky
For three Thanksgivings.

Born here,
Raised here,
I was nearly buried here,
Everything about me
Traces back
And back
To the poorly kept up park,
To the woodland's hidden hills,
To the trees with our names carved deep,
To the water,
To the street,
Climbing hills with bare feet
And hand-me-down sweaters.

This town.
The only roads I truly know,
The only place I want to go
Back to.
You know I can't stay,
But you do know I love you.

My hometown.
Every corner of every street,
I walked it all with aching feet
A pair of shoes hanging from the sky
For six Thanksgivings.

Children Like Melting Pots

I see the way my mother
Grips everything around her,
Fearing it might slip away.
She grips the steering wheel,
She grips her purse,
She grips the photographs.
Her knuckles turn pale.

Her knuckles are so white
That they look like
Dried petals of the white rose
My father gave her years ago.
But like all things my father gave her,
It withered and wilted and died.

Her knuckles are so white
That they're the same shade of
White as my father's,
But her hands aren't turning into his.

I worry even more that
My hands will be like his.
They will gift someone lovely with white roses
But when the night falls,
They will give nothing
But pain.

I see both of my parents
In the mirror.
My face is the color of their knuckles.
Maybe it's a sign.
A sign that
I was born from fists and blood
And rotting teeth.

I'll thank whatever gods there are,
Every day,
That my eyes are my own.
I may be my mother's reflection
And my father's mistakes,
A manifestation of pain
That looks almost exactly like they do,
But my eyes don't quite match.

If I could ever paint a proper portrait
Of myself,
I'd make my skin
The white of my father's,
My hair the shade of my mother's,

And my eyes their own shade of green.

I would finish it and burn it, probably,
Like a modern Claude Monet
Trying to destroy
The things I can never learn to love.

The Universe In You

I stare at an empty page,
Waiting, once again,
For an idea to appear.
It never does, you know.
It's always you, filling in
All my empty spaces
And I have the urge to create
What cannot be recreated:

I want to draw worlds
And write universes,
All dedicated to you
And how you make me feel.
But I can't,
And I shouldn't,
And I won't.

Parts of me would like to believe
You'll come back to me,
But I shove them down
And make myself think of you
As I should.

My page remains empty,
My hands remain cold,
And you remain.
At least I have that much
To be thankful for.