



Tare Rebele



Tea and Small Bones

Tara Rebele

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*From the waking, we'll cleft into daylight.*

*In two.*

Morning is already a ghost on the stair.  
And your hand on her wrist won't hold  
back the dawn, the slip, and the gone.  
She'll leave you wanting on that hill.

Porcelain offered only in the darker hours—  
in long black gloves and a fit of yellow,  
her apple in a suitcase, our sadness content.  
It is the season for tea and small bones.

Your corner is flowerless now  
and even the moths shun your bright.  
We'll follow them to their tree,  
alight on our own guilty branch.

You'll carry her window with you—  
her forgetting complete before nightfall,  
the breeze relentless and obliged.

You'll never stop seeing her there—  
on the rocks, in your glass, squirming  
sylphlike in your soil.

The wave is more or less. And the faces in the tidepool have no notions.  
Can you taste their salt? When I touch them I will vanish. My fear is a  
cloud. Ancestors will hear the rush. And we'll know. Take the air as ours.  
Our spines chanting in accord as we lie. And the children. Do they smell  
the brine? There are things I only recognize in water. We'll just dwell a  
moment. Touch the sand. Take two steps. I won't wear last winter's dress.  
And you won't ask. The roots of our feet have depleted us. There is  
nothing to get rid of. I'm tired. I will sleep. Fold me with arms you don't  
admit. Tell me those were mustard seeds you planted in my womb.

To say the day draped  
its slice of skin  
tucked for the scent  
its sting a rub  
between fingers

hear its blueness  
in veins and knots.

There should be water  
and smoke  
its rain cratering your ease  
like the once before

you must climb well  
the warm is old here.

There should be water  
and sting  
its slice a scent

you must risk well  
the vein is old here

hear its ravel  
blue and fraught.



The ripple in your evening  
left little to heal when  
you skulked from your swell —  
all twilight and choking.

They went to the water to breathe  
canalized fatigue into tips of fingers  
and wet throb.

"We were mineral,"  
she'd gag, not drowned by the gone.

There were notions in that pool  
holding us beneath their calm.

*I can take this shallow.*  
*I will age it in my hands.*

(Mica wasn't her name between the hours of damp and noon.)

To own the story isn't enough —

you have to bash its hiss  
against your tendril  
like you never were  
its dusk.

I call you tightrope (my tricky awhile).  
Unglue your pendant from my lips.  
Return to your swamp —  
your traps are full of rashes,  
the radishes more full of sun.

We're salting the lily still.  
Forcing skin in our press.  
A red-cheeked bitter persists.  
It's thickening at a boil, crushed  
between the palm and the fleshy part.

You'll drink it like heaviness,  
betray it like noon.  
Weave its glass in your nest  
and taunt the wolf with your leaving.  
You'll spite while you slide.

When the seduced last gargled here. The error was the ardor. The elegant mouths en masse. The gesture was desirous and salty. Some were hard-boiled by the splendid. Some caught stealing oranges from the hive. In the midst of upward she whispered, "These are the boots of solitude." Where the floor slants she goes under. Where the floor goes under she disdains. Where she is inclined the floor whelms. This lack of possible will leave you splinter.

Tunnel as deep as a breath,  
how can you refute the gust.

*You have to lose something —  
there is no space left.*

At the back door we'll ask in  
the darkness, offer it sap  
from our breasts, or chamomille.

*We'll become unconscious —  
she has only gone for a walk.*

The air is better with your bareness  
wrinkled around my fault.

*You are welcome to fall in.*

Those who were on the verge  
of her      also  
disappeared.

We can't be sure if the mother stands shaded. Or if the infant is a man with a lamp. What matter, anyway. You are no longer a headache. And I, for one, have not showered you with flowers. Your eyes speak new flavors. I will swallow them now. And save you for the rainy season. The questions at my feet give us mushrooms. What has happened to the singing? Before we die again we'll have guests. Fold the laundry. It's okay. We are sheltered and cloudless. The stones will open their petals soon. I will tremble in your suchness. There is always a door. Merciless and inviting. Have you told the ants? That tree is ours now.

There's a wall separating the pebble from the rock. The breeze is the voice that whispers you to me. I am dangerous with a flute. Follow my trail of pollen. Unbeaten is the name I call our love. Its element is water. I have mapped you in my mouth many times. Finger me up from the riverbed. We'll make smoke from the fade. Just before dawn I'll slip my paper wing from your palm. When I go the masked will dance. An old woman will sing. I'll drop a feather on her foot. The bells will jingle every blue step. My wet hair wrapped around your finger. With bristles of the sun you'll follow. The crow will see. He'll carry you off in his basket.



Meet the fire dawn at her breaking.  
Risked with holy yellow light.

Weave prayer through her tangles.  
Promise against her tongue.

She'll ride fertile to tomorrow.  
And will leave him on the verge.

Swallow what she'll offer.  
Taste the bitter of her month.

Push velvet through the rind.  
A fleshly melon for your burst.

Sand sticking to your moist.  
Your fruit in a jar.

I called for a god but only a bird appeared. Or was it a book. Something green and sour to the touch. I was once a turtle. Only swift. The one who wore her hair down sat upright in our path. She asked for your story. And told it for years. When the rain began the words became tea bags. I touched myself and my shell became a shift. I pushed my tongue against her breast. And embraced the whole in my breath. Girdled by chance, your thighs around my hips. "Lay with me until our leaves orange." She offered you sorrow and water. You bathed me with tender and force. She has worn you on my back ever since.

The garden is asking again today. And the honeysuckle carrying on. I've staked hesitation, pruned why not and planted shards. Allied with the weeds. We understand and harvest in between. We ambition like symptoms. I've stashed several pasts in the shed. On Tuesdays I bring water and biscuits. On Thursdays I rest. I could tell you more if you want me unfamiliar. A touch of salt. The wistful stung regret. With the excuse of erasure I stained you extraneous. I've no resolve. I am recent. If we eye and lip I am airless and ginger.

Evacuated and bored  
the bone strings itself  
amongst the beads and settles against  
your neck  
prepared to winter.

You'll dig the pit but it will win,  
the earth not bothered by the blemish.  
Your fire burns the lovely just as well —  
seal the womb from fresh air and poise.

Viscid and potioned with curtains drawn,  
just scraped scabs on her tongue  
the healer hang fired and ready for her  
incisions to submit to his fork.

Your injections can't pierce this cocoon —  
bite me to a bruise and spit my skin.

Her crotch is a nest. Her nest warm and deceitful. The nest in her crotch is  
a trap. Her cunt nested in her trap. Sweat the fog its fungus on your skin.  
Stopper the lime pot before you squirm. My gold pearl. Can't stop her  
birthing. Shell lips carve her fortune in my flesh. It gets so hot in the pit.  
These nauseous escape games. Your spirals hung the night's spots as  
purple as my trust. Slip toxic glisten chemical salts to your tongue. Do I  
taste much better for her poisons?



Supine and merely in the after hours by whose clock. You throat it—this  
reaction to near. Its dirty little sequin squeezed tight against your pulse.  
The bloat is a friend. It will love you and fuck you. Over and under and  
into undone. It will apologize while it pressures. You'll ask for spread.  
Warmed to your skin. Please hate me you'll moan its plastic to your slope.  
Please go on in and do your almost. There's a moment, an hour maybe,  
before it's certain. But even then. You curved toward the flame and  
screamed all wrong.

What would quiet look like  
if it came this afternoon —  
a stranger on the stoop,  
your shiver in her clutch.

We trust the herbs and potions  
but even they get the all-overs  
when it comes to your guilt,  
their tea bootless and tepid.

There are few good breaths  
and of those several  
have soured on departure.

I watch yours volatilize,  
I'd hold it if I could:  
don't talk to me anymore about going,  
Your plans are terrorists  
and I'm already ashed.

Sacrifice a hammer to the evening  
and wrap your braids around her torso.  
Dig a hole and drain your ribbons in the earth.  
Exits ought to be pretty and complete.  
Taken by grown-ups  
and children alike.

The bitemarks on your lip will expose you  
when he sneaks up like that —  
backlit, innocent and eerie.  
Circle his question with your damp  
skin and make an example of it.  
Embed a pearl in your button  
and gloss your own quiver.

*It is a very high window.*

*You will love him to the smash.*

He'll leave no damage, a sideways signature,  
and a thought he can't fold.  
In front of his hands floats a gesture,  
her eyes cotton and honest.

What can we prove  
this morning  
(butter on our breath  
our caverns full  
as big as an egg  
in her armpit or swell)?

When the flood comes  
purl robes from its flow  
(and its ripening  
by night and by day  
pulls and strains  
against our hooks).

A view with flaws bared  
(watch their faces  
changed by the yolk  
into flames black and astray).

To go twice      and to have  
and to suffocate the breach  
  
(where the warm is now).

I'll thank you with beets. Care deposited in the mammarys. Fruit urgent and difficult. The promise. It is flat. It skins and sinks before you rub. I may have said water but I meant talon. Or tourniquet. The parade will go on without us. Better to burrow in the forest. Beneath the sidewalk. I've been on this boat before. The bars were different last time. But held with welts and needles. I will drown in that relief. Asking is a bullet. Hide my seeds in your clench. Nest through the waking. The lesions will betray us. The birds won't come to scratch. Refuse you even this. It wasn't me undone in their wings. It wasn't us.

Tomorrow we'll reckon. Tonight let's desist. These breasts have languished into ribbons and sleep is perched. Yesterday we'll know better if the familiarity lied. I've swallowed two whole and don't within a thing. I would wear you enduringly if the ersatz had not. Without the flowerage there'd be want. We forgot to surrender twice and yet. Please take this skin off my hands. I've no use for it now.



If you are bitten at noon  
no aspect of a feather  
will stop the womb its flooding  
like how darkness will leave  
its gracefully carved labia  
when washed from its slope.

Between sunset and rise  
the quiet grows redder  
a drowsy, arrhythmic dance that  
slips a skin right past its body  
so near she can almost feel it  
like a memory's spine.

No prior experience with migration  
can prepare you for this night  
its architecture of gaps  
a moth-eaten moon  
fallen into its sun  
and no way to know  
if a sleeper will take your dream.

*These words are only half air. And a little more scorch than a lung can expire.*





