

## Heart's Exile

Who's detonating the Roman candle of your heart?  
Who's telling you off for not knowing how to do not-your-job?

(Do you know that I am taught to not take threats?)

Who's filling your entire skin with scabs as only the monstrous can?  
Who's turning you into them by positing that you are the mad one?  
Who's teaching you to speak the major disconnect of corporate professional?

(Do you know the piano of my childhood still resounds?)

Who's there atop the smell of grass in a home I can no longer call home—

Looking down upon me as the wind creaks through the windowsill, chiding me  
as my weight sinks down on the leather coach,  
as I feel complete fatigue in my defeat.

I see light still through the thick residue of the window pane.

## **Little Maria Wants to Take a Nap**

Little Maria stands in the rain, stands in the snow,  
stands in the dark of night in the middle of a hurricane.  
When lightning strikes, she sees too clearly how in spite of her faith  
everything has come too little, too late.

She sees how silly her struggles are, as she jumps up and down,  
like a clown, entertaining no one, buoying no ego, her powdered  
makeup all ruined by water dripping under the heated room.  
Little Maria wants to take a long, deep nap.

She is so tired of Fathers beyond reproof,  
and the Vicar of Clergy telling her to pray.  
Little Maria was praying when the vase of tiger lilies broke  
into shards parishioners held together with heavy stones.

Now, the stones are gone, lilies long forgotten. Little Maria has counted  
to fourteen neon green frogs, but still, there is no turn.  
Knife in hand, she thinks at last: to hell with God! when He chides  
gently: You must not let them kill the love in your heart.

## Holy Saturday

Between being afraid and falling asleep,  
I curl into a little ball on the wooden floor

except of course Master comes  
right through the door I forgot to lock.

He sees how grotesque  
I am, how low.

The clutter around me shows how the cockroach  
to be exterminated is me.

I can hear his footsteps as he curses  
at me, as it is my turn to feel his rage.

Master keeps a running tab of my infractions,  
recalling the dishes he has done,

the tables he has mopped, the clothes  
he has brought to my bedroom door.

It doesn't matter if I cannot do it anymore  
because I cannot do it anymore...

or if I do not want to go pick up  
dinner because I do not want to sully myself

with the outside air. I wonder:  
Will I be beaten tonight?

The lockdown taught me our greatest enemies  
are human, and I hate them. Master

watches *The Palace Suck Up* while I drug myself  
and curse the flowers, yes, but mostly the trees,

their green fingers with invisible dust  
so fine I cannot see them reaching my eyes.

In horrid spring, I am the sore loser  
in this battle of man versus nature, holed up

in the parameters of my room.  
Tonight, I want to be invisible,

not wearing a gold-yellow  
shirt that Alex told me will bring good luck.

Well, I had shit luck today:  
my middling capacities highlighted

as I dozed off, the lights on.  
I rub my eyes red, knowing the spiky retort,

*I'll just work less* can never be,  
because Master expects delivery.

Master says I should go lay down and die  
if I do not have the grit to walk the last mile.

I blast music so when Master comes  
and tells me to take off my earphones

or rip them off me, the music will be the metronome  
as I wait for the lights to go off,

for me to close my eyes to the blood lust  
in his eyes. Only then can I gather up the courage

to kiss his right hand. I will whisper: "Don't worry,  
I may be a loser now but soon I'll smother

all the dreams you've fostered in me to be  
worthy of you... please, give me more time."