

HOME

- 1 **a:** one's place of residence: domicile
b: house
- 2: the social unit formed by a family living together
- 3 **a:** a familiar or usual setting: congenial environment; *also:* the focus of one's domestic attention *<home is where the heart is>*
b: habitat
- 4 **a:** a place of origin *<salmon returning to their home to spawn>*; *also:* one's own country *<having troubles at home and abroad>*
b: headquarters 2 *<home of the dance company>*
- 5: an establishment providing residence and care for people with special needs *<homes for the elderly>*
- 6: the objective in various games; *especially:* home plate

But first, a focus on clichés:

They say that home is where the heart is,
But they also say a house divided cannot stand.
So what am I to do when I'm torn between two parts of myself?

Then again, a house is not always a home,
Though what makes it one, I couldn't say.
Is it the people within or one's attachment to the place?
Either way, I digress.

Sile

Every strike to my body, my psyche, my self

But I do not bruise,

Every cut, every slash

But I do not scar.

I am platinum.

I am steel.

I am unbreakable.

But how dare I articulate my silences

How dare I speak my mind, my pain, my self

I am not a statistic, not one of many, not one in four.

I cannot –

No, will not be reduced to a number, a quantity, a fragment

By words and fists.

I have worth

I have violence

I have power in my words

And in my silence—

nces.

—Yes, in my silence,

In what I don't say as much as what I do
Because I prefer the creation of culture to overexposure.

The truth is,
There is more power given to the word
Fire
Than to the cry
Rape
And though I've never experienced that particular brand of hell,
Far too many have.

But I won't shut my mouth
Because someone else has had it worse
Someone else has gone through more.

Yellow

Yellow fades just as any other color, maybe even more.

Maybe it's because it shines more brightly, or maybe it's because it's more noticeable against the stark background of life.

But inevitably, the yellow will fade, because nothing lasts.

I. But why focus on that?

Because while it still shines brightly, while the vibrancy is there, it's impossible to tear your eyes away from it. Maybe in the way that you can't look away from a car wreck, except the wreck hasn't happened yet; but you know it's inevitable, because inevitability is much easier to process than uncertainty.

II. If you insist the negative will happen, are you still disappointed when it doesn't?

Does it matter that you were wrong? Or does the soothing of that sting come with the relief that you were, that maybe the world isn't as twisted as you thought in your bout of chiffon cynicism.

III. But we focus on it anyway.

Some yellows are still bright, constantly reminding others – no, let's be honest with ourselves, reminding you of your own faded shade, that cynicism creeping in once again as you're reminded of what once was.

Once you were in love – in love with all shades: sunshine streaming in through your window, illuminating the pages of a book.

IV. Where did it all go?

Now that saffron has transitioned from daisies and sunny skies to desert mountains stretching endlessly across the topaz sky, stuck in limbo somewhere between sunset and twilight.

But still, there's a light that you can see, another hue that you can barely make out: the sun rising in the distance. Because between these shades of yellow, there exists blues and reds, and that variation is what makes life colorful.

V. How can you enjoy yellow when that's all you ever see?

Either way, once the colors are muddied, and nothing is clear (nothing is red and blue or even yellow) you'll cast me aside, because that's what everyone else did, does, will do.

And the truth is, no matter what you say, you are no different from them, him, her, me.

Because I push people away just as much as they leave.

No, more than they leave.

Because I am so afraid to be left to myself that being the reason for disappearance seems like it should be easier, because at least then I can blame myself, at least then I have someone to blame and it's me and everything should be easier.

Silences II.

There are breathless moments. For a second – no, a minute, maybe more, everything freezes. Everything stops.

Your breath stops in your chest and your heart stops beating for a minute – no, it must be only a second, because I’m still alive.

But in that second, you feel nothing. The calm before the storm, to return to the clichés – the moment of suspension in which nothing hits, nothing passes,

Until, finally, it does.

And it’s a split second before the real strike, but it hurts far more.

Because in that second – no, that minute, and for much longer afterwards, your heart spikes in your chest and your ribs crack from its pounding.

But the truth is, you’ll hurt yourself much worse in the days to come, and you’ll hurt those who love you even more for even longer.

Because why would you do that to yourself? Haven’t you been through enough? But you still can’t help wondering.

Did that really happen? What did I do to deserve this?

What did *you* do to deserve this?

Because we learn from our childhoods and that is why I’ll never have kids of my own.

The world spins as slowly as ever, and my mouth runs dry.

Nothing.

I sit in your Goodwill jacket and your nondescript shoes; they exhibit wear from the previous owner, even though you've patched them up twice.

Sometimes, you trip over the loose soles.

Occasionally I'll dream of anger and nothingness, or moonlight and terror, but usually when I awake the same complacency settles in like an itinerant on a bus seat, home if only for the night.

Different night, different bus, same repetition, same routine.

"I loved him once," I whisper in the darkness.

"I know."

"I think I did," I correct myself, frailty coloring my voice sienna to match our desert sky.

"You did."

"I don't think he loved me," I add; an unrelated thought, as though his love was barely tangential to mine.

"Maybe."

"He didn't." This I'm sure of.

He wasn't home, but you are.