

Cropper Creative Writing Contest Submission

3 Poems

by

Mallory Lynn Albrecht

*A Breath Under*

*Santa Muerte*

*Valkyrie*

A Breath Under

*For Samantha*

A crystal angel spins on its hang rope in the bathroom window,

sending light to pieces  
without right or sound

as I lie still,

here

in this lesser made coffin,

in a dark all my own

until the spaces between heartbeats trill.

But always, somewhere between my last and what would be  
a glory of these sylphs in the faded porcelain, is where

I fail

some memory,

for want of a breath

I know will fill nothing

but a chest

like the one in the living room,

empty

but for the sunken initials

and all her worldly things . . .

Santa Muerte

we were walking in  
in your old neighborhood  
the barrio you called it  
when you saw  
a shape  
amongst the flowers  
they had lay down  
to cover some poor boy's blood

you stooped  
to kiss the covered skull  
its dark eyes like bullet wounds  
and i knew

you and death had been friends  
in that other life

Valkyrie

*For Chris, Jason, John, Steve and Tim*

A kiss severs us.

It tastes like dust and wakefulness,

and a long time to wait

as the letters pile up

like bodies . . .

He holds on and on,

as if I am enough

to tether him,

keep him

on this side

of that dark stinking river.

I'll come back, he says,

but the dry lands are greedy.

Insatiable.

Leaving him at the gate,

I have a prophecy of a thought:

There is something already dead about him,

having made so fateful a promise.