

Cropper Creative Writing Contest Submission

3 Poems

by

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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.