

## **July Equinox**

In the days before we decided what would become of us, I dreamt only of standing face to face, palm pushed against palm, our heartbeats nearly aligned, hovering between two rhythms and one, so close my eyes could only focus on small pieces of us at a time: my steady, your blue green, every strange silence, every glittered future dancing—we were held, colliding, timeless, the tension between us almost an eighth wonder, we carried our own charge, aurora'd flux filling the space we could not: those last two inches small and strong. We almost made it. We almost closed the gap.

## **Abecedarian of Platonic Desire**

All this beauty around us. What are we to do with friendship? So easybodied, piled together on floor or couch, we bend, bind, brace. Her bitten lip in mid thought. Their baggy legged short shorts, corduroy shirt stroke. His collar bone become sweat slide dew skinned in low light. Kitchen-doorway dialogue at the party. Goddamn. Elastic imprint on the wrist. Fold of skin, secret space.

Guttural anything: air escape  
Hair in hands—twist, tousle, tug til the scalp melts  
Hurried hellos  
Intellect unbridled, give me all night banter  
Just a few more minutes  
Jeté flawless, jeté clumsy, always  
kinetic, always  
kindhearted, sometimes selfish. Those lilted hips, hobble  
hips, hips that sway behind the curtain  
Make-your-own silent disco  
No one watching  
Naked neck stretching  
No bras, no nipple shyness, these bodies body the way they please.  
Open mouth laughing. Pose against the plastered wall peeling.  
Gather all my quotidian details. Find my  
radial pulse, please, that two finger touch.  
Rosemary oiling the air. Tell me a xiphoid process  
sternum story. Sainted selfie on the thrifted couch.  
Side boob seen through wide-armed tank top.  
Trace a tattoo show-and-tell with me. Shameless  
unraveled shirt hem.  
Vocal fry all night. Where to steer  
all this desire? Not x-rated, just  
mutual exaltation.  
Yes, you—

And you. And you. And all our  
zipless admiration. This, the  
zenith of platonic desire.

## **The Body: The Instrument**

Let her make you a thud in  
the dark. Fold yourself at the  
hips. Crescendo into a new  
shape—an arch, a bridge, a  
cane. Lift effortlessly into  
her touch—her fingers at  
your bra strap, on the small  
of your back, release into  
each kelly green and sculpted  
fingernail tiptoeing one  
vertebra to the next. Try. Lift  
up. Be only a body. Hear  
only her body. Attempt to  
press music into her touch.

## **The Handshake Seems to Choreograph Itself**

THE MOTHER stands with her daughter at the entrance of the first grade art gallery, waits for the others to emerge from the November drizzle, makes small talk with the teacher, places her umbrella in the corner. Soon enough, THE MAN and THE WOMAN arrive. [THE MOTHER dries her nervous palms subtly on her jeans] THE MOTHER considers that THE WOMAN is more reserved than she looks in pictures: one hand in her pocket and the other on THE MAN'S arm. *I've heard so much* [THE MOTHER'S arm begins to lift and extend] *so much about you!* [There seems to be a brief look of surprise, at THE MOTHER'S hand reaching, at THE WOMAN'S

own hand leaving THE MAN'S arm, each crossing the space between them] *Thanks for coming.* [Their palms and fingers meet with equal pressure, neither dainty nor dominating] Families filter in under the fluorescent lights as THE MAN moves his hand to the small of THE WOMAN'S back. [Rain drips from THE WOMAN'S jacket as their hands rise and fall together] THE MAN asks *Where should* [the hands loosen and fall in unison] *where should we go first?* THE MOTHER gestures toward the daughter, who has headed over to the portrait of precariously stacked tea cups. [Already THE MAN'S hand is intertwined with THE WOMAN'S] THE MOTHER feels the breath she'd been holding exit her [the room is cool and THE MOTHER'S hands are clasped together now] and she leads the way to the daughter.