

Caterpillar

I lie here, sticky in the sheets from last night's metamorphosis.

We churned ourselves together, melting butter and honey,
till the sweetness crystalised.

We wound ourselves round and round one another, spinning
wet silk strands to make our chrysalis.

Cocooning caterpillars, fattened by feeding.

Urged to congeal, I clung to you; it was too late to let go.

For one night, we were bound together, till the morning
discovered what we might become.

I twitch, my antennae sensing the state of the day, while my
organs rage beneath my shell, made arid and angry
by the assault that has awakened them.

Today, I am reborn into something you have cultivated,
creased in amongst your cotton covers till I fold inwards
and beg you for my wings.

You promised me I'd wake and be transformed,
that you had the power to make me something more
and open my eyes to see what you saw in me.

In the dark, you were my guide and led me through the leaves,
past the preying eyes of watchful birds.

'You'll fly with them soon,' you said.

As I crack open our brittle womb, I feel the sun burn my new-born skin.

Kaleidoscopic colour dances dizzily before my delicate limbs, which push
through the crisp casing in search of your comfort.

Hope is there to sooth the pain of waking, as I wish
to widen the wings you've woven for me.

Stretching, pushing, forcing full my battered body,

I snap the skin surrounding my head, abdomen, thorax,

lifting my neck to raise my compound eyes.

Wet wings like warmed wax are yet to lift me from the bed,

but I know they are there, and I imagine stained glass patterns beating in the breeze.

I glean the room, groggy and groaning.

I explore the erosion of what I was and find my evolution,

eager to embody what you have elevated me to.

But the window gapes open and the space beside me is empty.

Just your chrysalis, more carcass than cocoon, remains, a distorted imprint.

Through the window, cool air circles around and around,

clinging to the moisture and coaxing it away to join

the dream that I had woken from.

The curtains, waving moanfully, are shredded;

the sheets are ravaged by gaping holes;

my clothes are hanging tattered and torn;

you have gorged yourself.

My wings are drying now, their crispness allowing me

to raise them high and watch the mottled stains of brown and grey

create their powdery camouflage of shadows.

Horror and disgust shiver down

each hair of my thorax.

I am still uncertain of how each part functions,

but certain of the role they play for you.

My wings burst boldly open and I fly.

You have made a moth of me; you have kept your promise

and given me flight

but forced me to follow flirting flames,

be scorched and burned.