I Watch My Husband Work on My Jeep & Am Reminded of His Selfless Protection

The slick, almost glowing ratchet turns & clicks in his hands—
slow, deliberate, mechanical.

The tension spanning your tongue
at the base of the dam
unwinds, leaves lighter to the spilling wave
into the lake of mud & sunshine

I listen intently
from a sitting height,
skin off the dead peas
noticing the lake, not noticing

I imagine versions of cutthroat catfish,
of whiskers fighting the strong, tepid water
to death, dreamless swimming in pools
of whispering, dreamlike, strong, tepid water
carved by words, escaping your mouth.

I listen intently
for the first time ever, exposing myself
between your teeth—to the silence simmering in the spaces
of whispering, dreamlike, strong, tepid water

The Catfish My Husband Reels in in August is More Than Just Fishing

I imagine versions of cutthroat catfish,
of whiskers fighting the strong, tepid water
to death, dreamless swimming in pools
of whispering, dreamlike, strong, tepid water

I hear the pole down & whisper who we are,
in the future, listen to the spilling wave
through a heaven

The First Time I Wrapped My Hands Around My Husband’s Waist for 100 Miles

I think of him ahead of me on an edge
of time too close to not forget
the feeling of my arms around his waist,
the motorcycle’s engine vibrating through us both & it’s not so important
where we are or where we may go
because the hot, orange sky
spoke above the yellow daisies & wind, his breathing. We’re one & I glimpse his smile in the mirror;
I squeeze tighter to let him know I can see it.

I Watch My Husband Play Hockey & Am Reminded of His Ability to Withstand My Winters

I. Ice sprays under his skates, his body gliding against the cold biting against the late evening of early winter,

II. The evening is brittle, everything moves very slowly or not at all, but eventually
the ice will melt, the sun will rise,

The Night My Future Husband Stole My First Kiss

That I’d forgotten something—
(don’t think, just kiss me, just once)
That I was oddly humbled—
a mute scream tearing from my chest,
ripped from my lungs, battering against the wet, smooth
yet sticky feeling of lips jailing my words—swift, brutal,
unexpected. Oh, how memorably awkward it was yet how perfectly
smooth it came to be.

A Bridge of You
Ariana D. Den Bleyker © 2019

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