



POETRY

Akathisiacs

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Waves of thunder collide inside our lungs
nurses hold canisters of pills to light
delicate between finger and thumb,
jewellers appraising pearls.

A hard shake held up beside the nape, with baited hush
assess how many days we'll be imprisoned here.
Shells pressed against walls with ears -
strain for the sound of the sea, salt air, the rush of freedom
it takes blood to hear.

We pull hooks from our bodies,
cast them back to the dark like mermaid scales and purses.
Sea debris haloes our feet
carapace of drowned souls, scattered drift wood hopes,
lost possibilities.

We see white cascade into a cup like
so many stars thrown across the night.
Petals and ashes on a grave of water
teeth shaken out of our skulls,
crabs scuttling to escape crab pots.

Lips licked clean of salt, but still we taste it
our tongues creep out like the tooth of a delicate cone shell,
toxin trailing like oil on water, damage done.

Our hands quake as we stretch them out,
naked pain.
Lightning strikes in pulses that tattoo lines across our skin.
We are sailors weathered from red storms, waged within.

White fire licks our feet, ebbs and creeps back like foam.
Fireflies dance shadows flickering into these barnacled bones.

We hold crushed promises like cutlasses to our chests,
rudderless ghosts sailing alone into plundering depths.