



POEM

## Medicine

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### Abstract

This poetic mediation explores eating disorder as trauma survival and embodied language of suffering that has been hidden and silenced. Treatment processes and experiences that misunderstand and pathologise this embodied language and survival recreate silence, powerlessness, entrapment and trauma, and therefore, reinforce the need for the eating disorder as a means to find voice, autonomy, and freedom.

### Keywords

eating disorders; suicide; lived experience; trauma; iatrogenic harm; healing; embodiment; critical eating dis/order studies

### History

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I bleed cayenne and salt  
chilli crushed in my palms to molten rage and swallowed,  
buried, silenced –  
reborn and kneaded into the knots of my spine  
white and glowing skeleton where agony is spoken loud.

I split and share pieces of myself with myself until there is no more,  
until the cupboard is as bare and ravaged as my heart  
until shadows house themselves in the space of my soul,  
consume the emptiness  
and fight for the fingerprint of bread eaten long ago.

Loneliness, the weight of a thousand cups of water  
tipped into empty bowls,  
empty hands held out,  
washing tiny feet that tiptoed in the dark where sound was dangerous.

The sweet melt of sinking in to butter soft blankets  
wrapped warm and safe,  
vanishing to vapour in the night heat.  
Cast off in restless dreams  
and torn from hands like scraps of food to dying men.

They promise medicine but with it comes the bittersweet aftertaste  
A mix of love, foxglove, castor beans,  
The low hum of angels' trumpets ringing in the shade of night.

Sound of macadamias cracking open beneath my hands,  
the echo of my skull as I fall and collide  
with the ground.

Coffee drips and coffee grounds crushed in morning light  
forbidden while tubes and drips keep me alive.  
Groundless and confined to a white bed in a white room  
I listen to the sound of machines tracking my heartbeat  
and feel hunted.

A drop of oil pressed into the aching point in my chest,  
scars on scars never soft and unfolded.  
I feel, beneath,  
the slow boiling –  
water, cayenne, salt.

### **Statement of Integrity**

No potential conflict of interest is reported by the author.