

“Gloom”

There was a time I was a goddess
in small, soft ways.
I used to make things with hands and heart.
All I make now are excuses, and even they fall flat.

I sit with nothing but
the echo
of an echo
of an idea,
once mistaken for purpose.

There's a silence inside me I can't stop hearing.
I haven't cried in months,
but every insistent moment
feels like something already broken
still able to be

dropped.

The iron in my blood is weighing me down.

I am a house where all the lights in the rooms
went out at different times,
and they haven't come back on.
Joy left quietly, without ceremony.
The fight went next, mined from my bone marrow.

I used to call this a rut,
now I call it Tuesday.
Or Wednesday,
or nothing.

I'm something I can't quite name,
remembering what it felt like to have
something to say
and a voice that could say it.
There was bravery in me once,
now I flinch at shadows I used to call dreams.

There is no phoenix here.
No ash, no cleansing fire.
Only a slowly dying spark.

A dimming so gradual
until it was so sudden.

The mirror doesn't lie,
but it doesn't tell the truth either.
And maybe that's the point,
but maybe there never was one.

There's just dust on a desk
where a pen hasn't moved in weeks.

But still, somehow, I breathe badly, grudgingly
but in, regardless. Then out.
One more time, just like always.