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Conceived in Violence

Certain, in permanent ink, the desperate
inscribe their verdicts on the wall dividing us.

I am here in caricature, accurate as a shadow,
understood as other.

Safe in blame. Safe in writing
of each other’s blood with our own.

Bone and breath transparent,
we inhabit the bottom of this place together.

*

I am told there is a ladder.
I am told too much
and again the sun ascends
only half-way and is red.

I wonder if we are climbing
any closer to the sun
or if the earth is sinking
beneath us each step.

*

To live happily I know
someone must suffer.
When I struggle with breath
another will always be singing.
When I sing it’s as if I’m sharpening a knife.

I wish it could be some other way.

Though we were born together
sharing a room without walls,
we are no longer children,
and I know the dead weight
of your body on mine
has become the price of my home.
Author Notes

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