



Safeword

My last safeword was *hummingbird*. My first was never heard. It stumbled out in fear of being skinned and swallowed by the silence. The sun dropped from the sky like a fly.

Little-known fact about night: it doesn't speak for anyone other than itself. I know this because in the dark what screams screams only to claim a body. So I made each word to mean more and more than what it meant.

Hunger for *Chew my thigh flesh slower,*
thirst for *Sip every drop of neck sweat.* Syllables were spat, the word prepared for release.

Language could no longer keep the two bodies from collapsing into one, how rainwater crashes in a salt lake, how a godknife pierces a knife. Little-known fact about speech: it migrates into narrow mouths like a sparrow. Tiny feathered sparrow flapping away to the mercy of the silence, why did you leave my tongue to the mercy of the hands.