

## *Cycles*

### **Spring**

#### *Riptide*

The weak fear men  
and men fear you.  
Strong men serve as no competition  
against your powerful currents.  
Rippling muscles,  
rippling waves.  
Sweeping fist  
meeting salt water.  
You destroy lives with a single motion,  
and surround us with such great force  
it often quiets our souls  
and chokes out our hearts.  
Yet, somehow we still run to you with open arms,  
like a child to a swing.  
We strip ourselves of our February worries  
and embrace the waking nature,  
bare of unnecessary protection.  
You have the power to kill us,  
and we dive right into you with no regrets.  
We explore you as if you are a museum.  
We inspect you as if you are a piece of art.  
And we swim in you as a paintbrush swirls in its colors.

## **Summer**

### *Plea to the Sun*

Burn the cold away, would you?  
The ice is in my veins now, expanding,  
and winter has sedated me again.

I measure the days by the light,  
A sundial waiting for my shadow.

Blind my light eyes, would you?  
The hot sting is comforting  
and good vision is overrated.

My skin feels my own  
only when it is warmed by you.

But stay for good this time, would you?  
November suffocates slowly,  
and good air is hard to come by these days.

A cracked compass, waiting,  
I will always look north.

## **Fall**

*40 in a 60*

She says the fall foliage gives her nostalgia.  
But Nostalgia doesn't visit me often.

We have our little moments as we pass each other  
on the sidewalk  
from time to time,  
both of our heads down  
being sure to skip the cracks,

and driving down that one winding highway,  
familiar headlights meet my own  
and I'm 17 again.  
I'm someone I've never recognized again

on that road for the first time  
and I hear my father's calm voice  
tell me to speed up.

I'm going 40 in a 60  
and I'm afraid of losing control.

That fear is not nostalgia  
as much as I try to force it to be.  
No, that one has stayed with me,  
an itch under the skin.

I scratch,  
    and scratch,  
        and scratch,  
until nostalgia visits me  
Again.

## **Winter**

*The Christmas lights look like meteors*

Drafty dining room  
and a lonely brown recliner,  
a handful of too-large shirts  
and three jackets

I rotate through the  
cold months.

those twelve impossible months  
stuck on repeat like  
the broken CD  
in your forgotten car.

I could wear your glasses  
but seeing through  
broken glass and empty eyes  
is not recommended  
by my optometrist.

My astigmatisms make  
the Christmas lights look  
like meteors hurling into the  
pearl lawns of December.

I will set my thick olive tinted glasses  
on the empty porch step  
and replace them with your thin silver  
frames, perhaps cutting my finger  
on a stray shard.

I'll button up a hundred  
mismatched buttons of  
checkered and plaid polyester  
and armor myself with  
each musty jacket  
from the back of the coat closet.

Maybe then the snow  
will bite softer  
if it sees a familiar face.