

Zoé Duhaime

Revenge on Rabbit

THE CEILING IS STRUNG WITH THREE MOONS
 SUBMISSION
 FORGIVENESS
 AND MERCY – mercy, I call mercy.

I call underwater hornets in my home,
 I call nightshade as seaweed,
 I call her husband was my husband a month ago.
 I call hell and high water,
 I call purging the ghosts with snakes,
 Snakes in the fishbowl.
 I call my dead father every day,
 mercy.

SOMEONE HAS HELD A KNIFE TO THE THROAT OF MY TACT
 I AM A NEVER BLOOMING LIME TREE
 I AM BABY TEETH AND LEMON JUICE IN AN OYSTER SHELL
 I AM ONE HAND ON FIRE, THE OTHER HOLDING OLIVES
 I AM ABSOLUTELY NOT
 I AM THE N IN FRONT OF EVER
 ON ITS BACK
 LIKE A GOOD DREAM
 I AM AN N TIPPED OVER
 I AM A SHIPWRECKED NO
 I AM A BLACKENED BRIDGE USED AS AN OVEN
 I AM BAY LEAVES IN A SKILLET WITH A HATCHET
 FRIED HUMMINGBIRDS
 mercy.

I am a shaved bearded-iris,
 i am clovers, without the lovers,
 I am the c (of that word)
 Rolling back
 Collecting water.

here's what I need:
 I need to know Polaris
 personally.
 So, if you love me
 please move to the Vatican
 now,

so that I can call you.

there is an observatory there, you know. The Jesuits named the craters.
 (they're probably good company)

What I have done,
 secretly
 is put a neat triangle between us and the amazon,
 which is the next warm water I think of
 for drowning the lust and the grief.
 So I obsess about Polaris
 even though my body is two bison, a house
 my body is a plum tree you buried for the good of the pie
 my body is apprehension and finally
 a blackened church
 Venice in one hundred years.

You might not know this about me,
 but I am prepared to lay down each finger at the foot of the bed
 like a runner
 and I will wait there
 until mercy comes
 when I call.

I feel like my father did, when his father remarried.
 I feel like my ancestors are trying to figure out how to reach me,
 but I've shut out ghosts (I live in a big scary house)
 so they're thinking birds,
 would she notice if there were a dozen hummingbirds following her?
 Would she use a colander,
 sling us under water
 and make a quick embalming in sirup.
 Would she pour her ancestors over French toast
 and eat it alone
 after you've left.

Mercy
 I call mercy.

I call the North Star
 and I
 friends.

She calls this a mile from the making of amends.