

BETTER DAYS

A newsfeed said “I’m fine” is the most common lie. Also known as treatment resistant depression

my preoccupation with death is an appreciation of endurance: a twitchy megalodon shrinking

into a smaller shark two million years later. Pluto renamed dwarf from planet. Glorious

disaster. Brilliant progress. The psychiatrist said my 41% response to the rTMS treatment was not

great and I was discharged. Despite my survival *some* improvement also means - not enough health.

The psychiatrist advised reading and gardening are medicines. Death is a deepening. Also known as

long night after a brief summer. I ordered the book of love on Amazon. Free shipping. Arriving tomorrow.

Also known as, cure. If you think of depression as an argument with yourself. If you think of recovery

as unlearning, then how are we becoming? How did we become? There are notes in music

of the same pitch with different names. F sharp and G Flat, for example. Enharmony. Homophones.

It’s easy to mean something by accident, pressing pause on my phone, silencing the synchronized

sway of singers in a YouTube clip. Their breath as even as lawn mower lines under a pale lemon

prototype of morning. It’s easy to forget joy as we rush to read, garden, fuck, eat

yogurt and brush our teeth. It all means so much. Also known as, nothing. Tomorrow, I plan

to picnic with my inner saboteur. I’ll confess over gooseberry jam and clotted cream that she is an amazing

queen. I'll say her makeup is glimmer but she should leave
me alone. I'll shake crumbs from the pink

gingham tablecloth. I'll apologize to dandelions
for pulling off their heads. I'll seed bliss in a fallow furrow

with what I choose to notice. The aftermath of storm leaving
a bright glint in a raindrop, clinging to a purple phlox petal.

Autumn and spring, both blooming red. Both beautiful. Both endings
and beginnings. Here we are— in late capitalism, also, mid

apocalypse. My friend Colin, walking his whippet, texts that a group
of bearded white men wandering his street yelled at him through

a megaphone: *Jesus is king. Repent and be found.* They asked Colin
for directions to the revival church since it wasn't listed

on Google. I responded with the story of my cycling trip
to St Mike's Hospital today, mazing three blocks through traffic.

I imagined my soundtrack was Wicked Witch of the West's
urgent theme. A stolen Toto in my bike basket, swirling hungry

seagulls above: also known as, my army of winged
sock monkeys. In the Wizard of Oz, we've all lost something

we want back. Can imagination save a life?
The trick of poetry is to make a familiar thing appear

to be something else. The angry jaundiced face of the spewing
fire hydrant. Depression as a germ of hope. Insects retreating

from our stained land. Also known as, the world is suffering.
Now is the only season. Now— that Beatles song is in my head

the one with lyrics I keep mistaking:
tomorrow may rain so

I'll swallow the sun.