

from The Mundane, Sublime and Fantastical

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120.

So I heard that you were done talking
that you've reached the end of your words
that the rest of your life in silence
will be matched by respectful nods
from strangers who heard that you had run out of words

So you're not talking anymore
but have you given any thought to how it looks
you bobbing your head up & down
in response to strangers nodding at you

You're a snake

What does it look like with your head bobbing up & down
in response to strangers nodding their heads?
What do you think?

Oh, wait
right
you're not talking anymore

* * *

& now that you're not talking
& all I have is the bobbing of your head
up & down, up & down
this is what you told me

that your dad & his friends laughed
when they made lewd jokes between them
& all you remember is the laughter
& not any of how those jokes made you feel

today the men at the office make race jokes
as if you're not there
& they laugh & snicker
laugh & snicker

now all you do is bob your head
up & down, up & down

Maybe someday
you'll forget how you feel about that

121.

Thursday morning
a gong from the night sky
the rest of the world is asleep
& I'm madly collecting thirty words
(& their kin)

words slip from my fingers
stick to my sleeves
slide back, slide back gravity bound

I'm going to have to recreate the whole world
with language from these thirty words
but what's language without possession
or colour?

127.

Men in red t-shirts and khaki pants work inside
men in blue t-shirts and rolled up khakis tend the ground outside
a snake pours out of my head

Men in red turbans & blue t-shirts
their faces & hands covered
in dust & cement
(who knows what they do)
women in white serve food

a snake slithers

sullen women in brown sweep, mop the floor

I sit at the beach with a snake dangling from my head

128.

Red ants black ants pale orange ants
red ants black ants pale orange ants
tree tree tree tree tree
palm fronds in the wind
my head pours out
a red hibiscus

more women in brown—housekeeping
they will not greet me back
my head pours out
snake after snake
snake after snake
snake after snake after snake