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Philomel

When I dug my crescent-nails, pretty with work,  
Pearl-colored as fine milk is pearl-colored, the  
Handsome handle of a dagger, into my sister's  
Husband's gritty back, did I, as the sweaty straw  
Ripped through my gaping chemise, the one I  
Embroidered with these dagger-hands, sitting by  
My sister on some Athens veranda, our laughter  
Shuddering between the wide-spread legs of  
Incense-brewing tripods— did I think then, as  
He poured his tobasco-fluid into my belly,  
*Someday this will give me wings?*  
No. I thought, *Suppose there were gods, once,*  
*When Procne and I embroidered on the veranda,*  
*But now they are dead and rotting in my belly.*

Song of the Coven

*A Two-Voice Poem*

Three hundred years ago

*you would have hanged me as a witch*

*you would have hanged me as a witch*

So I curse you with ugly wallpaper.

I curse you so that change rolls across the  
floor every time you get your wallet out

*I curse you*

*I curse you* with limp soda,

limp dick.

*I curse you with an unsheeted mattress  
and one thousand lonely nights  
in a trillion vicious voices, saying,*

*I curse you with a twin-sized mattress  
and one thousand lonely nights*

*Tell me again how God is not a woman.*

*Tell me again how God is not a woman.*

I curse you with the aching heartbeats of  
the hunted heathens,  
with the burning skin of a hundred saints,  
with the acid of salt tears frying your eyes.

I gift you with none of our thunder.

*I will tear your eyes from your face  
and shove them through your jaw  
So you can see inside yourself*

*I will tear your eyes from your face  
So you can see inside yourself*

*Tell me again how God is not a woman*

*Tell me again how God is not a woman*

because we are done

So I know which ways to pull you

*being kind.*

*being kind.*

scream out for God

And when your old and moldy bones

*She won't be there.*

*She won't be there.*

Roach Song

There's a song in there somewhere.

Girlfriend leaves for work, early, and  
the bed streams with roaches. 3:20 am,

I can't sleep. The window is open

so the plague can get in. I imagine

curling next to you, you sleep naked,

the smell of lemons. Last night, with

a fly-swatter in hand, Girlfriend says

*He makes you horny, huh.*

Not a question. I am masturbating

beneath the maggots. I am a body for

the worms to crawl through. We already

tried to kill the dust, it didn't work.

The song plays beneath my eyelids.