

Three Poems

Hafizah Geter

sylvia is a place holder

sylvia plath is a poem in my mouth,
 bounding back and forth like
 someone you have loved,
 but who hurt you,
 or was it—you that hurt them.

and she won't stop calling,
 or writing your mother letters,
 or waking you in the middle of the night,
 to ask you to fetch her water.

sylvia is a memory
 that won't keep,
 instead she sits on the backs
 of your legs when you
 are trying to love someone else.

if you find yourself imprisoned in a mountain village

inspired by Ted Hughes' List of Suggested Writing Exercises for Sylvia Plath

the hornets are weeping in the garden.
 the rosebuds come to you limp
 as fish tossed ashore. you see yourself –

the laughing merchant, the woman
 opening to the enormous dark
 that turns away.

you are only the stones
 you put up with, this body
 that you wish remained.



we let them go, and replace it with another

inspired by Sylvia's journals, June 11, p. 392

june is loaded with scarlet and girls
who pull anger up by its roots.
their hands: silver-plated scissors,
taking up half of april.

we have put time in the garden. we are intact.
we ignore the mad wild, its still,
stony glare that hurries into this openbacked trunk.
i took with intent, the stucco house, the scent

in the living room, the breaking
twigs and red geraniums. the grey sky lowering.
my sorrow is full of raveled ends, our wearying
in the raincoat pocket.

like a girl stealing rhododendrons,
i have a violence in me. i cannot live
in the country. with its train of remembering.
how can i say this calmly? i am just getting used

to peace. i stare down orange and pink rosebuds &
send them to jail.

