

Coughing Up Ash

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My blood flows like sandpaper on bones,
no amount of scratching will rid the itch
of you.

I tried to cut
you out of me.
Morphing into my breath,
you fill the space in my lungs, choking me.

Ad hoc, I tied knots-ties, tried
sniffing from poppy seeds,
tearing out the stem from leaves,
nothing will rip you out.

Then stillness falls upon me,
an engulfing macrophage of sobriety.
I reside, soot-covered
and still.

While my old form falls
off, in ash.
Scales are burns, of pealed skin
I am Sybil, sin.

Kuklos, by infringement
of demons eating their human flesh,
plucking their feathers
Hecate, I am born.

Where demons lurk, crawling on crackling floors
in the house of souls.
With too long a wish-list to stop by my door
twice.

Slinking underneath another's door.
Inside, personified feelings morph.
Wall by wall,
one after the other, little Liliths are born.

Dear Baba

(وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ * بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ)

سورة التكويد

The name you gave me
is what people call my moving bones.
I often think of when my sins will be reckoned
by what name will I be called forth?
On the day when all I am is laid bare—
will demons pull me to hell from my hair?
For the misfortune of being born a female
one-fourth of an heir.

Baba, these words I have written you
are ones all my sisters share
hidden like my face behind a scarf,
even though it's men who stare.
I hid and bid my time to preserve my image
in your mind.
Baba, you taught me to feel scared.

To curl up like a feline
that's been locked in a room
for too long,
because you think I belong to you—

my honor lies on a bed,
Baba, I feel dead.
Cover, cover, cover your head,
they told me to whisper because men
get aroused, it's my fault I exist
so, my words aren't heard
but will you allow for them to be read?

Baba, you've covered me
I don't exist,
maybe that's the point
my fingertips on your beard, Baba,
I thought you loved me?
I'll see you on judgment day.
Good bye, till then.