

Wilderness House Literary Review 17/3

Sarah Munoz

Names I Have Called Myself

I am a bleeding heart / I am sprouting crocuses out of the silences inside /
I am a whisper in the breeze / I am a fading thought / I am a folded page
/ I am at ease with being uneasy / I am still afraid of butterflies / I am the
pinkish dawn beyond the train tracks / I am the night purpled after a
thunderstorm / I am a loser on a winning streak / I am the splinted bones
of my people / I am enough

Wilderness House Literary Review 17/3

The Things She Kept

I promised myself I wouldn't become
My mother
The way she keeps things
And reuses them
Filling her dishwasher with plastic cups and
Cool Whip containers, which she uses to store leftovers in
Or as cookie tins
I remember growing up seeing newspapers she hadn't finished reading
Piled under end tables—
History collecting dust
And there was more than just one junk drawer (which wasn't junk, to her)
And she'd ignore expiration dates...

She was raised by parents who were impacted
By the Great Depression and the Cold War, who impacted her
To waste not, want not—
Which impacted me to purge and
Appreciate the affluence of minimalism in my twenties
But now, as a mother of two, and in my thirties
I find myself reusing plastic cups and Cool Whip containers
And letting papers pile up and collect dust
As history
Repeats itself.

Summer Things Steeped in Nostalgia

plucking purple Coquina clams from the wet sand before a wave triggers them to burrow in / catching fireflies in a glass jar and poking holes on the tin lid so they'd live as a nightlight until set free at daylight / walking bare-foot on sidewalks at night, feeling slug slime beneath our feet / sleeping in / brown sugar cinnamon toast / Saturday morning cartoons / roasting marshmallows until they catch fire, crunchy-black on the outside, melted white within / flashlight tag / fireworks / short shorts / Clinique Happy perfume / Baz Luhrmann's Romeo + Juliet Soundtrack / wishing you into existence / meeting you / making kin / reliving again

Wilderness House Literary Review 17/3

From Where I Saw the Geese Today

The sun sinks into the still pond
From where I saw the geese today
The air gets cooler still
I stand and watch the light fade
Into what seems like a gentle surrender to the day, still
If I could view the sun more closely
I'd see her ablaze, arms flaring upward from the still waters
From where I saw the geese today

Wilderness House Literary Review 17/3

Where Is My Sun?

Where is my sun?

My 3-year-old questions the dull clouds coating the sky.

Spring warmth had teased him the previous day.

Rain painted my sky white and

Chased my sun away, he answers himself.

I squeeze him in a tight hug at drop-off,

Knowing that some things are not so easy

To process.

I imagine a child in Ukraine

Searching for the same sun

Maybe at the same moment

But, instead, coating the child's view are clouds of dust

And debris from bombings.

I imagine Ukrainian parents squeezing their children tight

To cover their heads, to avoid saying goodbye too soon.

I imagine Ukrainian mothers questioning the sky

Some heard in echoing wails that even bombs cannot dull,

Where is my son?