

# Not A Story

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It took me four years to realize  
that tears were a sign of weakness.  
I am not weak. Simply careful.  
I arrange everything I own into  
small pockets in the crust of the  
earth. I fold myself into them like  
making dough. When something  
happens that doesn't fit into my  
small pockets of earth, I shake.  
I take down everything thing  
around me in wild, climactic  
sweeps.

I want to withdraw from these open  
spaces. There's  
too much air to breathe

I try to understand the shifting of  
emotions, but, it goes past me,  
clearing the trees to form a pathway  
I never follow. How does your  
weakness grow? Out of the creases  
of your skin? The pounds of flesh  
covering bones buried somewhere  
(But, I've forgotten the hiding place).  
There's no known cure for  
heartsickness is there? What if the  
heartsickness is in you?

There's a certain degree of safety  
In small closed spaces. The choices  
become easier to make and understand.  
The gaps between the story and its  
telling don't feel so sublime here.  
Instead, everything is calculated  
and categorized in boxes big enough  
to hold a party mask. Onetime, I fit my  
extremities into one of these boxes,  
smashing my legs and arms until they  
turned to powder. My private parts,  
still in tact, fit nicely into three separate  
boxes labeled "Level 4 Contamination."  
My voice (which was always silent)  
was taken away with a gag and a fist.

There are too many reasons to walk away. To turn away with arm and flag raised in surrender. The simple solution of shutting down and turning off sections of memory that emerge in fragments of stories... sometimes.  
like a string of pearls, the sentences: one word glued and then two... turn inside me and I open my mouth to say please stop. But... no sound comes.

Escape in certain situations is impossible. The lights come on and off and I see the faces in flashes of recognition. I hear the voices. I know them too.  
But, I don't respond.  
I don't speak. I don't cry. I don't scream. Instead, I write a story in my head about a better time in a different space without so much...

#### Memories:

You can't leave them on someone's doorstep with a note attached.  
You can't ask them to take over where the others left off. Where the slash across the thigh, below the cotton underwear, still throbs when exposed to heat. And the angry scar indicating struggle forces a permanence you don't want. In one picture frame, I construct the ideal image of a beautiful woman tied eternally to this.  
T/his face.

**Motion sickness rocks my head  
towards the ground. Here, the story becomes  
an open space with too much vision and  
imagination. The landscape, vast and  
permanent, mirrors the story, battling forever  
for the final word.**

