

## **Inheritance**

These days,  
I welcome the silence;

feel the Earth  
hold me.

Even in the absence of sound  
I am still listening

to all the stories  
still called fiction;

I carve them on the pavement  
so you may know which way  
is home.

Or else, I let the noise  
be noise

and do not use obligation  
as distraction.

I am not appliance,  
No domestic creature meant to serve:

I am a person, I am a person.

There is an existence  
not driven by guilt.

There is a word  
for how I feel,  
and I am not afraid to know its name.

My mind is not a prison,  
but a prism,

& I have learned shadows  
are a given

in the presence of unspeakable light

& my days are not tallied  
though they are numbered

so I count my kindnesses  
and say *love* more than  
goodbye.

I count my meals  
instead of the weight I carry.

I carry what is useful  
forward.

a few things I've gathered:

Socks are still socks even if mismatched.  
Everything I was told about a clean room  
was true.  
You can still see a smile under a mask.  
The way I speak to myself is the way  
I speak to you.  
I should unmute myself more often.  
I need water more than I recall.  
The people in this room can also smile.  
The people in this room are also people.

Even as I untether myself  
from this built world

I know I exist.

The battles continue  
where my feet stand;  
I need no pictures to prove it.

The celebrations live  
inside my bloodline;  
I need no ribbon to prove it.

I am already a triumph.  
Every day I breathe.

& years from now,  
when I become ancestor

I will tell them all about  
the courage of distance;

how we learned to

hold space instead of hands;  
I will tell them about  
the color of courage;

how loss echoed through  
an entire generation

& the children became teachers;  
learned love is not defined by age

I will tell them of this land  
we ripped from a people  
we can never repay  
but we will try & try,

I will tell them about the way  
a footstep can be felt  
on the other side of the planet

So mind your sole.  
Move only in truth.

You have inherited this silence;  
now make it sing