

Equilibrium

In memory of Eric Levi BigLeggins

1

After child after child after child, no one
believes in the cacophony of sirens anymore.

If only we could break back these bones
and form a new ceremony from each of our losses.

O' mend our teeth from another dark stretch of road,
our rugged knuckles from another first of the month.

2

And still the children keep jumping from trains.
The people in town dream anxiously,
fire and iron licking at the corners of old,
handmade quilts. They have forgotten
the language of antelope and creek bed,
find in its place only one way to say
we are not responsible.

Today one man woke the callous offering
of a bird's beak and black wing
left on his doorstep at daybreak.
And what of all the other warnings,
of all the family lost because their hearts
were too heavy for them to carry?
If we could put these omens away, down in the basement
the door could be locked,
the mutter of crows left there to decay.

3

Next time and it will be the dance of chairs
and imaginary high speed chases.
It will require a fine sense of balance
and a song of stars.
Just the slightest slip of the rope
and the sky will be set
loose, the body
like a shift in the river's current.

4

The Bridge can hold, the body can not, and our excuses
will do nothing to save us now.

We survive between these barbed wire
fabrications. We gather together in the middle of the night,
call out the names of lost cousins and friends who cannot
cross over to the other side because we keep
praying them back.

We ask so much of them: *slow the car down, don't jump,*
don't let go, come back to us.

But what are we really guilty of? – the blood memory of what
we can't forgive ourselves for.

5

Hollowed out grief becomes electric,
loosens a thousand storm patterns
in the marrow of ghost homes,
ghost children, ghost love.