Blood

Blood rushes out of me. I have been waiting for it. Stomach muscles tight with cramps I want to scream blood bright red and black. Tiny I curl into a ball pain clutching your back still asleep. I have been waiting for this blood red cleansing I want to tell you I want to wake you from your sleep.

You are with me my lover for my first blood crimson pouring out of me onto white sheet staining your futon. It is my first blood I am twenty-four older than most pain has scared away my blood. You know more about blood than I do have held women while they curled into balls small on the large bed it is my first time. Today I am twenty-five and a thousand. Today I bleed again.

I am fourteen end of the summer I don't bleed I wonder if the blood is clogged inside me. I am not pregnant we have created nothing you forced yourself on my body there will be no child I will not eat.

I have not known you long my lover and I bleed. I will not create for you we create ourselves I am writing you into my book making you up as I go along. With you I bleed I wash the pain away. We lie together my hand holding my blood I laugh out loud. I love to see you laugh you say there is often sadness in your eyes.

Come with me I take your hand walk out with you the morning is waking up. Look at the sky I say red and yellow
reflected on white snow still thin on the ground look the sky is bleeding my pain. You fill the white porcelain bath ankles in the snow hose spraying me as I stand beside you shivering I smear my blood on your body laughing. We lie together bodies immersed in the hot water stopping the flow of my blood and I tell you a story.

It is a story I wrote long ago I painted pictures to go with it I don’t have it anymore it was stolen by a professor I lent it to him to read it he disappeared. Your gaze upon me blue eyes waiting I begin.

* * *

Once upon a time there was a boy. His name was Graham. Every day he went out to play with his pail and shovel on the yellow sand in front of the purple sea. The sea was beautiful dark and rich. For hours each day he sat and watched the purple waves glimmering green and blue and the magical birds flying above him. The sand castles grew big and majestic sometimes so big the giant spotted birds came flying down and sat on the turrets.

Every evening as the sun went down Graham walked home pail and shovel in hand through the grey bedraggled neighborhood where he lived. Every night as he opened the front door he heard his father screaming at his mother. “There is no money!” “Can’t you come home earlier?” “You have a son, you know!” And every night he ran to his room hands held tightly over his ears.

One night Graham woke to hear his parents talking in hushed voices. “He’s strange,” he heard his father say, “he doesn’t have any friends.” “He goes off all day,” said his mother, “God knows where.” “Time to do something with the boy,” replied his father, “make him into a man.” “Can’t have a wimp good-for-nothing for a son.”

The next morning Graham woke feeling heavy. He looked around and saw that his room had been transformed. The walls that used to be painted gold with pur-
ple stars were grey. Where the paint was peeling there was old wallpaper showing. The curtains were no longer billowing in the wind the sweet sea smell entering his room. There were no curtains. There was no smell.

Quickly, Graham gathered his pail and shovel and ran outdoors past the torn-down buildings, under the clotheslines, through old work shirts, yellowed underwear, pink polyester blouses, his feet pounding on the gravel. Graham ran and ran, sure he was in a maze or running in a circle – where was the sea? Tired after a long day of searching, Graham walked home his feet leaden his body slumped forward.

“Where have you been?” asked his mother. Graham was too tired to answer. He walked into his room and closed the door behind him.

Day after day, Graham set out to find the purple sea with the words of his parents still fresh in his mind. He looked so hard that his eyes tired and when he returned home all colours had disappeared and everything was grey. At night he no longer dreamed and he was tired upon waking. After a few months, Graham stopped getting up in the morning. He gave up on ever finding the purple sea or seeing his friends on the beach again. All day, he lay in bed, his mind blank and grey.

One morning, many months later, he heard a knock n the door. Lazily, Graham walked to the door and opened it. In front of him he saw a young boy with a pail and shovel in his hand. “Hello Graham,” the blond boy said with a twinkle in his eye, “where have you been?” “What are you talking about?” Graham asked, his voice full of disdain. “I am Jens,” the boy said, “don't you remember me? We used to play together in front of the purple sea.” “No,” said Graham, “I don't remember,” and he shut the door on the boy’s face. But the boy was big and strong and he held the door open with his nose. “Please come back,” he said to Graham, “we miss you. I know you haven't forgotten us. You have just closed your eyes.” And he left.
Graham walked slowly back into his room and lay down on his bed where he fell into a deep, colourful sleep. In his dreams he was on another planet and he lived in a castle. The planet had wings and flew high above the ground. From the gold castle, Graham spent his days counting the green sheep with the purple polka-dots and the silver snakes. He had dinner with magenta snails and tea with Ms. Lumpyheart-the-cloud. Sometimes his planet was a bouncing ball that leaped on and off the earth and once in a while it shrunk and he could take it home with him and hide it under his bed.

Graham woke with a start the next morning. When he opened his eyes, he was blinded by a ray of purple sunlight. Could it be? he thought to himself. He inhaled. Deep into his lungs he could feel the sea air. Graham leapt out of bed and throwing on his clothes with his right hand, he picked up his pail and shovel and ran toward the smell that was filling his body, making him so light that he could fly! Graham ran and ran he didn't stop until the waves covered his body and he could feel the fuchsia fish leaping onto him. He turned around and saw all of his old friends gathered around him. “Nice to have you back,” they said. “Welcome home.”

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You climb out of the bathtub fingers wrinkled you hand me the white towel. Our hot feet melting the snow we run back to the house we huddle under the warm covers of your bed. What happened to your story, you ask, where did he go with it? I don't know. He stole my words my drawing he left I never saw him again. Today I find them the words are still there imprinted on my body. Today I lend them to you.

* * *
Night has fallen I am not sleeping the blood keeps me awake I am waiting to turn into a monster. I have seen the purple sea I have seen the silver snakes listened to the gossiping clouds I am waiting for your visit I will terrify you I am medusa. One look at me and you will turn to stone I will smear my blood over your body paint you red.

I am alone pacing into the night a creature of darkness give me your words I will consume them digest them excrete them. I do not want your words I have my own. I am a monster you have created me I am dripping with blood it is your blood flowing out of my body you are drowning in my blood.

I have told you a story I have given you my blood my body. You listen to my body you build sandcastles on my spine swim in my purple sea sleep nestled in my short red hair you are my body.