

Reflection

— after Louise Bourgeois, *Home for Runaway Girls* (1994)

I'm rough like this sandpaper
canvas. I'll use the white paint to recreate
my childhood house, navy blue for the steps,
& the black to detail swirled stair railings.

In reassuming the role as mirror for my mother
& window for my father to try & look through, not at,
I've realized there is no bend, only glass broken
into being—blown into something other
than body & stained iridescently dark.

White dots fleck the black hole like stars.
In this galaxy, the void is oval shaped.
Even though you can see the outer edges,
it still feels just as empty, vast & warranting escape.

An Ordinary Love in Pieces

— after Mickalene Thomas, *Sleep: Deux Femmes Noires* (2013)

We pull our bodies inside & intertwine
our limbs to reclaim them for ourselves.

I lied about my first kiss, it wasn't him. It was her
& I'm learning to forget shame.

A textured translucent blue sky
& green pastures spill into our garden bed.

Here, we take a black & white photograph nude.
Suddenly, I'm the woman I want to be. Head nestled

in the soft of your neck, I find comfort
in our shared future nostalgia. Unearth me.

Her Face Looks Like My Face & Their Faces

— after Frida Kahlo, *The Wounded Deer* (1946)

Caught mid-leap between a forest of trees
& hovering over a green leafed olive branch,
she forgets her body is the kind of body

that can be whole from head to haunch in one moment
& slung or shot the next. Here there are no headlights,
or flashes from otherwise invisible smartphones.

Thick white clouds billow in the background
& below the still blue water deceives us.
This is still a brown body with limbs splayed,

she's frozen with 9 blood red tipped arrows in her hide.
Using all that's left, she stares directly at the white shooter.
He's invisible. This is beyond the painting, it's bluer

& there are broken windows causing the wound.
The American flag is under the surface of the canvas.
The difference between bullets & arrows is time, not progress.