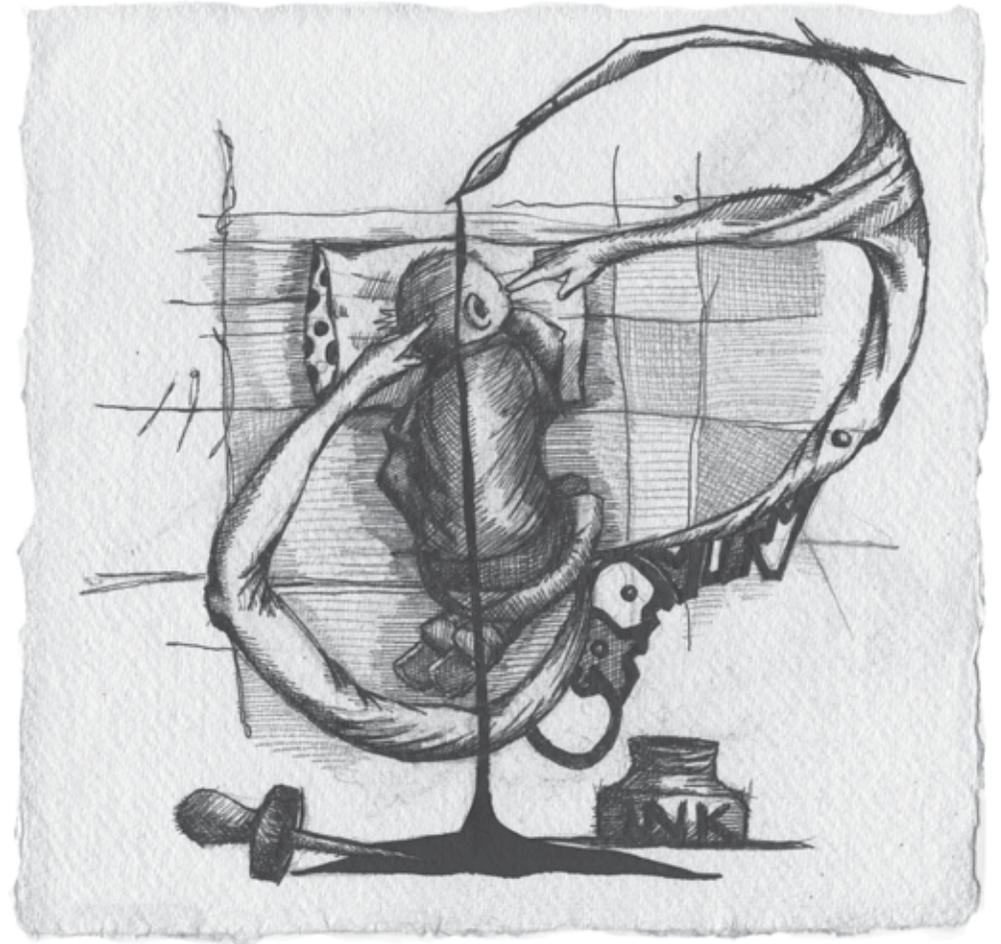


Gravity

Pituitary gland: well the size of a pea at the base of the brain,
flooding my whole self in the wet rush of feeling. Rivers of fire
across channels of thought begin to form an image. The sun
is falling in orbs the size of grapefruit. Juggling these lights on
a high-rise ledge, I walk over the line of gravity. Phone rings.
I wake before knowing if what comes next is falling or lifting—
find your side of our bed empty. You've called to see if
the dresser and kitchen table are ready for you to pick up—
if our son has been split 50/50 by ink and paper cuts. Sure,
I say, fingers tracing the profile of our son in his bassinet,
rubbing ours from the brim of his nose. But the marks of us
refuse to come off—my eyes your mouth forever his. I pull
my feet over the edge of the bed, walk to the leaving table—on
the signature line, I sign Gravity. Then I begin to slice fruit into
halves—wet light in bowls of skin—to offer when you come.



Dreams against Absence

I. First Night without My Son

I gather the scent of my husband like a bedsheet made of mice. Awake, the smell of our family scurries out from cracks in the walls. I cry this warmth made of little heartbeats—same as I cried for the empty womb once our child was born.

II. Second Night without My Son

My dreams are a mouse giving birth to a dozen pups. Blind and hairless, the rodents move slowly towards the scent of moonlight. Their bodies are open targets for crows, until the skull of the slaughtered pig opens its mouth and invites them safely in.

III. After Two Nights of Dreaming

At the foot of a tree, where the pig head was buried, I find a pile of gray feathers. The down floats towards me, as waves unfettered from the sea. A yellow beak the size of a diamond washes to shore. I push a thread through the breathing hole. Make a necklace of bones. At night I feel it roosting at my chest. I tell myself the wings were long swallowed, yet a palm-sized bird blinks against me.

