On Your Mother's Passing Psychosis, Self-Portrait With

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ON YOUR MOTHER'S PASSING

The world becomes so small when we remember there is no space wider than that of grief.¹ When I was young I thought lightning could be caught, taken apart & placed in a jam jar, firefly-like in principle, Jacob's ladder-like in mystery. But the greatest things don't break down into parts half here & half there. Only moving bodies across the horizon, only stationary bodies, only things that we have & things that get lost. It's so easy to get lost. Maybe there's a safe place, the hundred miles from the coast where water bounds up against water, so there's no edge, no sinking abyss. But I don't think you should go. Listen, leave the boats anchored. It's okay to open your mouth to speak, realize everything you want to say is guttural, & there are no proper words.

PSYCHOSIS, SELF-PORTRAIT WITH

At noon, the ocean draws so far back there is only a graveyard of exoskeletons. Underground, the water moves capillary-like through roots. A deeper shadow has eclipsed my earth. You must understand, many nights have been long for me; a small portion of myself was taken, a small portion like glowing orbs undulating in the distance. The hours fall Jacob's ladder-like in a maze.

Let's talk about the mind. Into that darkness, into the cerebral noise, I hear rummaging even when alone: I prefer myself in the singular.

Can you see the way the sky opens white before the storm? The brain works in strange ways, imagines a limb felled in the road.

In tin roof shacks, I speak Hail Marys caught through teeth, a stuck switch. Focus on my fall now, the way force torques me left to right.

I remember seeing myself once, seven times over between two mirrors, thinking this is me & this is me & this & this & this & this & this.

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