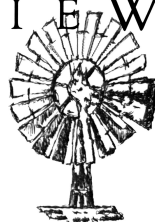


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Toti O'Brien

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SWOSUTM

REMOVED

by Toti O'Brien

You fall off me, dead skin.
Numbed, anesthetized
I unscrew from the wall
a brass hook, fish out
of the sink a forgotten cup
with the greedy callousness
of a looter, ready
to deliver my keys
to future inhabitants.
You have become matter, house.
Walls are nameless bricks
floors are dust.
I don't recognize you
and my own brutality appalls me.
How my heart shuts its doors
How my brains play dumb.

Tell me, is this what happens
with death? Is the split so crude
and so fast, when the body —

You are a body
and I am the soul, leaving.
You are my body
house that I have cleared.
I am the soul betraying a body
that is now just matter, just bone.



I am the soul, volatile, unfaithful
ruthless soul that owns you
no more. But how rude
is the ease of our parting.
Hind paws hastily burying
undesirable waste.
Muzzle looking away.

*They have pulled
a sheet over your face.
They are rolling the cot
across the dim corridor.
They have thrown a sheet
over your face. They are
rolling the cot, brisk and fast
past the double doors.*