

Ode to Lithium #107: Cliff

The Summer I was wrong, or arrogant, or hopeful, I told my Psychiatrist I could be rid of you by $\frac{2}{3}$. In fact, I'd started adjusting the dose myself. *I'm being honest with you*, I told her, *I feel fine*. When she listened without flinching, when she agreed to swiftly diminish your touch, her office was rock still. We were on the 18th floor of a skyscraper.

She was pregnant, her hands folded over new life. You are a graceful mammoth. You didn't wince, or scream. My baby, I should have listened. I would have heard your loyalty to my darkest waters.

In the ascending months, & the grey matter of sleeplessness,

I came to know what your absence always means. Cliff.

Every day knived sharper & doused in electricity.

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Ode to Lithium #600: Side Effects

The side effect of Lithium (is dehydration & peeing more frequently. The side effect of dehydration & peeing more frequently is not wanting to drink water at all because you pee more frequently. The side effect of not wanting to is not doing. The side effect of not doing is a couch & three movies. The side effect of a couch & three movies is *what have you been doing all day* with a raised eyebrow. The side effect of a raised eyebrow is a sigh. The side effect of a sigh is plaque. The side effect of plaque is a dirt road but you're bikeless. The side effect of bikeless is an unrelenting heartbeat with a passion for waves. The side effect of a passion for waves is dream upon dream where every object is as blue as the sea. The side effect of overwhelmingly blue dreams is a girlfriend who listens. The side effect of this particular girlfriend is black soap that sits staining the side of the tub. The side effect of stains is her name in your cheek like a cool marble. The side effect of her name is your hands pulling chicken apart into a big bowl that she is also filling & every now & then she shakes near your face a ligament so nasty you both squeal & it is good. The side effect of it is good is it is bad. The side effect of it is bad is crossing your legs in the psychiatrist's office, talking about side effects. The side effect of side effects is living your life. The side effect of living your life is dying. The side effect of dying is being remembered. The side effect of being remembered is being held like a stone, but of course it is not a stone but a bird that too will die. The side effect of a stone that is not a stone is throwing the stone & watching it fly. The side effect of flight) is a poem.

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