

My Mother's Back

All the effort of time is agreement.

There is nothing sane or secure about this relentless failure-
a continual and unnerving invitation to always almost fall.

We review the summary of your life while tending to
the massive pain exploding in your legs and back.

Prayer has worn you out. The perennial bend to earth to
collect enough to recollect, almost kind. The release after each clasp
when your exposed palm scraped across dirt, grasping for return.

My exhaustion, here, is that I do not share the distillation of
the familiar as subversion or surprise. Grief is the unkind norm.

I would like to return the things you have not wanted me to keep.
But this hushed, piercing, legacy of loss snaps back my sharp capacity
to love.

I lay my hands with the precise touch of every back rub that
transformed my day to sleep. This frightening love is what we have,
here. That agreement sustains us.

Truth is not an orphan, after-all.

Rachel Cyrene Blackman