

To the reader:

You are a lotus.

A lotus grows from the mud
but the mud does not touch it.
You have chosen to be a lotus.

The lotus is born from, but rises above, the mud.
And when I see a lotus, I think of you.





The Crone's Lament:

They have opened the earth and wrenched the bones and veins from her body.
They have pocked her and burrowed deep looking for marrow. They have shorn
her, burnt her, parceled her for a price. Divided her legs and hands and fingers.
They have bottled her bile. They have dammed her throat.

 Their chemical fires never go out.
Her curves are ploughed, scored, gouged.
 She is full of edges.
 Their lines cover her body.
Their lines are straight, unsnaking. They draw blood.

I have never belonged here. I am sick here. I am pale and pocked by my own
fingers. I have shorn and burnt myself. My hands are twisted from holding the
hammers – I am all edges. My ears do not hear her song.
They have dammed her throat. I hear:

The hammers. The clocks. Applause. The hammers. The clocks. Applause. The
hammers. The clocks. Applause. The hammers.

All my life, I have held a hammer. I have tried to jam myself into this fabric. I
have tried to choose a colour to be when I am limitless. I have tried to become a
thread within a tapestry, a note within a harmony. I have tried to find a place
where I want to live. Where I want to live. Where I want to live.





They wanted to feel gold in the winds.
Good for them. The winds are harnessed.
They wanted to taste gold in their foods.
Good for them. Their foods are poison.
They wanted to taste gold in their water.
Good for them. Their guts are turned.

The wheat is turned against them. The rice is turned against them. The corn is
turned against them.

I became tired of receiving gifts on a golden platter.
I became tired of the hunt being over before I was born.
I became tired of applause.
I have been tired a long time.

The wheat has been eaten and this is the chaff.

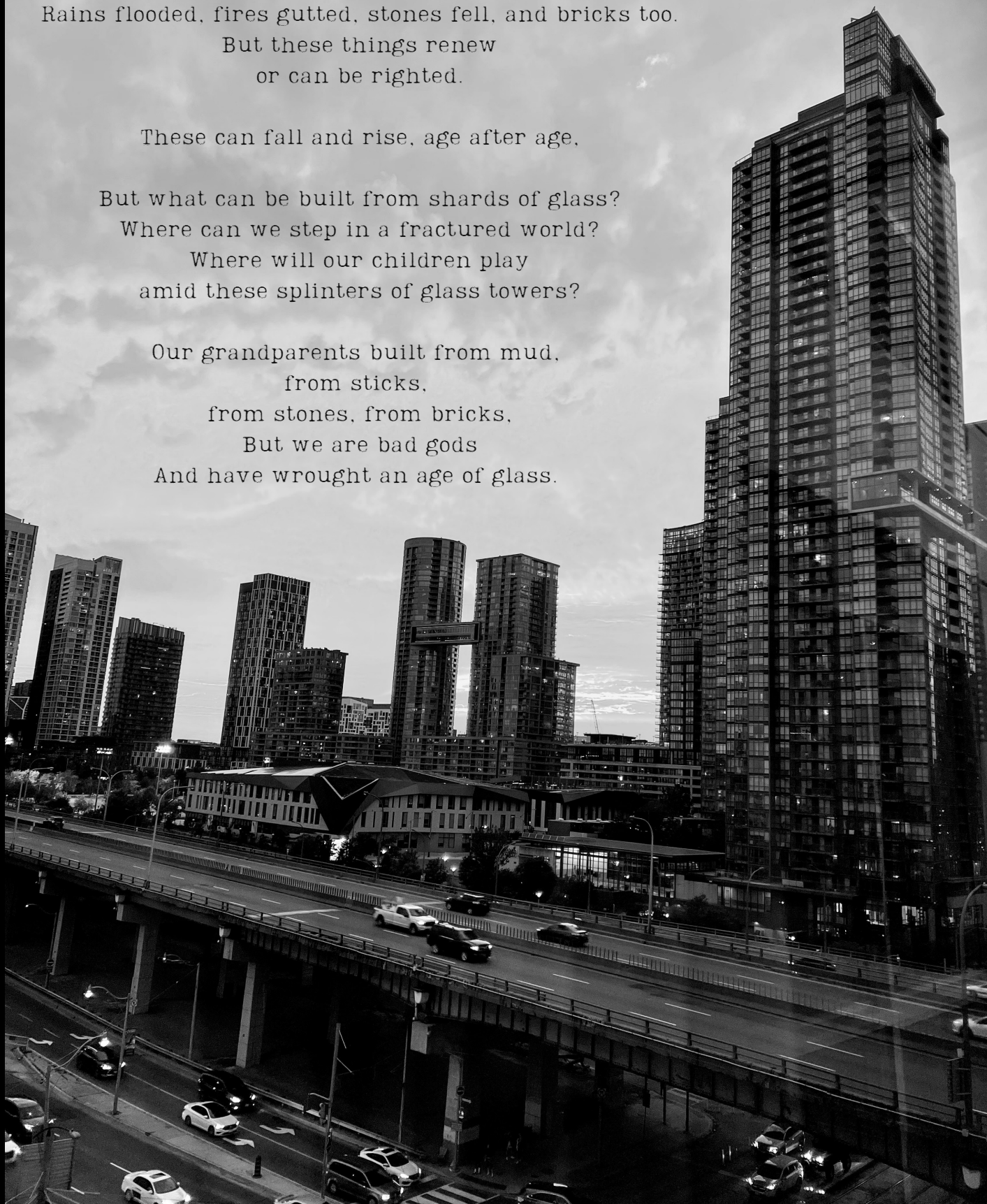
Our grandparents built houses from mud,
from sticks, from stones, from bricks.

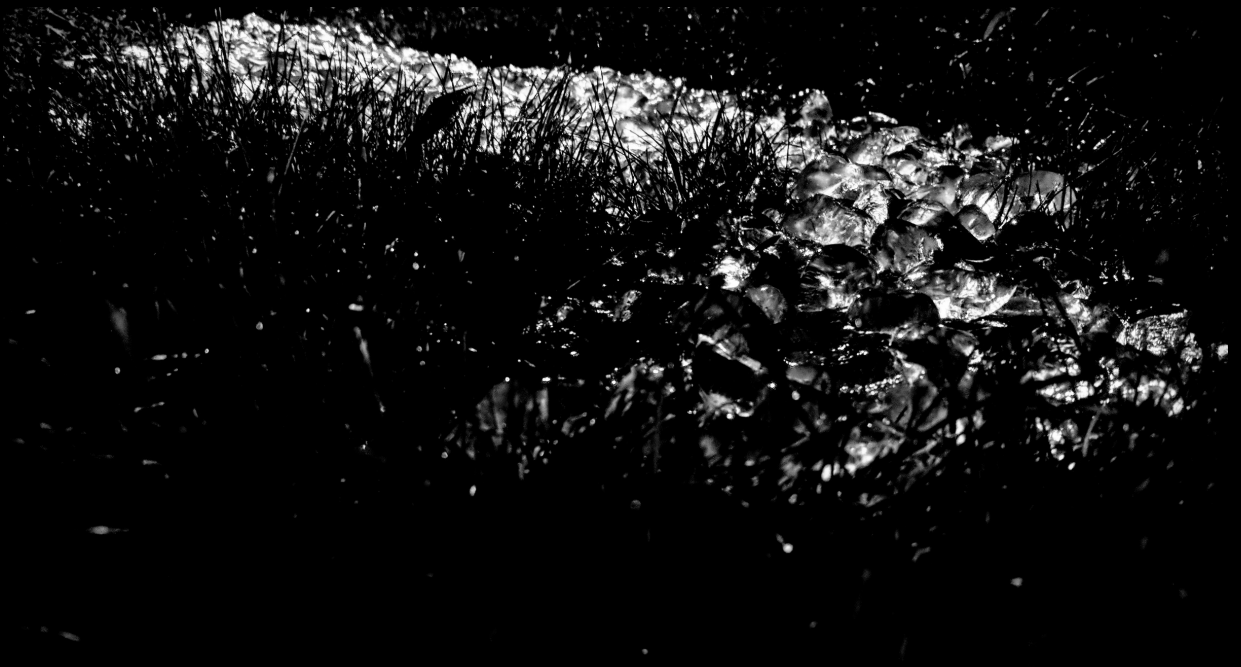
Rains flooded, fires gutted, stones fell, and bricks too.
But these things renew
or can be righted.

These can fall and rise, age after age,

But what can be built from shards of glass?
Where can we step in a fractured world?
Where will our children play
amid these splinters of glass towers?

Our grandparents built from mud,
from sticks,
from stones, from bricks,
But we are bad gods
And have wrought an age of glass.





Glass is smooth as a stilled sea.
It is fragile. Fractious.
This is the age of glass.
From what will we rebuild,
When this world
shatters.

The Mother's Lament:

The daughter I will never have asks
what it's like to be alive.

It's beautiful but hurts, I say.
There's pain and love, no pain without love,
i explain, tracing the lines on my skin.

Can I understand it, without a body? she
asks.

No, I say.

I want to be alive, she says.
Better to stay where you are, I say.
It isn't safe for you here.

And because i love her
- this daughter i will never have -
She becomes a heaviness in my chest.
She becomes a heaviness in my stomach.
She becomes a catch in my breath.

she looks out the windows of my eyes,
curls around my spine,
travels my nerves.

I feel her in my ribs, my joints
This daughter.



The Daughter's Lament

If I am born at all,
I will join the ranks
of those who hold hammers.
I will add to cacophony
I will be one colour
When I am limitless.
I will be a thread in another's design.
I will feel that something is terribly wrong
And I will think it is me

It won't be.
And I may figure that out eventually,
after great suffering.

It is this world
And its discordant melody
yet played
though the maker be long dead.

It is this world
Its lines and angles
Its sidewalks and fences
Its money, pretenses
It is this world
Made of cold, hard glass
Smooth as a stilled sea.

My lullaby:

I have this fervent hope, this firm conviction,
That I will become the person I need.
I have met her in dreams.
And she grasped my hands and raised them
And she widened my stance.
And she did the same for our younger self,
And the three of us stood on a grassy plane,
Arms high, back straight, chin lifted,
And we weren't hurting anymore.
We had become, each, a channel.
And pain, despair, ecstasy, love,
Every dark and light emotion,
Surged through us.
And we did not fall,
For we were no longer a wall,
We were no longer a reservoir,
We no longer fought the waves,
And we were untouched.