

## **the grief I will not let myself feel**

I've never grieved my first love  
the one who brought me here  
never cried for losing her  
never shed a tear.

the grief I will not let myself feel for her  
occupies its own universe within me  
it has its own culture  
its own history  
its own language  
its own physics  
it recreates itself automatically  
and repeatedly  
in the outer world.

the grief I will not let myself feel for her  
is epic  
mythic  
immense as the milky way  
but it's lost somewhere far inside me  
like a ghost ship with a broken compass  
traveling in endless circles  
in a dense fog.

the grief I will not let myself feel for her  
is buried in the safety of anger  
I hold that anger tight in my teeth  
I use it to try to plug the lifetime of holes  
she's left in my psyche  
but the pain keeps leaking out.

the grief I will not let myself feel for her  
is deep profound and frightening  
it's the monster under the bed  
the shark stalking the swimmer  
the mugger waiting in a dark alleyway  
it's a hydra tree  
with heads for leaves  
and tangled roots  
that she set like fish hooks  
in my embryonic heart.

the grief I will not let myself feel for her  
is locked up high  
in the tower of a castle  
with a drawbridge gate  
guarded by an infant.

he guards that gate with his life  
because he knows that my entry  
    into the tower of unfelt grief  
    means the end of her  
and he's convinced he can't live without her  
    and doesn't want to.