

Twin Poems

#1

The Race Is On

My twin sister is after me. I know she is.

But is she behind me

because she is so far ahead of me,

about to lap me?

Or is she breathing down my neck,

trying to pass me for the first time with all her strength and will?

Air is fire inhaled.

My heart clangs like cymbals.

We speed-walk, sweating buckets.

From a distance, we must look like runaway trees.

So awkward, so wooden, so strange.

There are rules to follow, you know.

The best speed walkers resemble steel cranes,

faces frozen with the expression of terminators,

arms whipping like metal bars,

hips rocking side to side like we have a disability.

But which one of us is more sick?

It might be me since it occurs to me to kick her the closer she gets.

Her breath is like a foghorn,

screeching my impending failure.

Whip those arms! Lift those legs!

Fuck! What if she is secretly a swami and at the last
moment right before the finish line,
she sprouts wings and flies over top of me,
blasting apart the crepe paper ribbon at the finish line,
cawing with glee?

No! I cannot allow it!

Suddenly MY shoulder blades burn, buckle, burst, and
I feel like the Wright Brothers must have felt when they took flight.
Corrugated wings of satin rustle in my ears,
whip like a pirate's ship, as it sails to victory, to glory, to treasure.

It is / who have wings.

It is / who busts through the winner's tape!

I turn to see her face, surprisingly joyous, even proud of me.

"Congratulations!" My twin sister hugs me sincerely,

"May your arrow fly high-" she whispers into my ear,

so only I can hear her above the roar of the crowds in the grandstands.

I feel both sad and elated at the same time,

watching her shuffle away, as throngs of cameramen swarm me with a rush.

I smile, wave, basking in their glory,

dizzy by their hundreds of popping lights.

I wave, do a little happy dance, giving the crowd

what it desires.

But the corner of my eye catches something astonishing,

a distant shape soaring above us and away.

It is my twin sister. Airborne. Bearing a wingspan

every inch as wide and powerful as mine.

She doesn't look back. She doesn't have to.

She knows I know she knows.

She planned it this way.

I sink to the ground with defeated sobs.

She let me win.

The crowds eat it up, convinced I am overcome with
the emotions of my victory.

Above, my sister is as strong as a Pteradactyl prowling
the heavens.

Love and hate wrestle in my belly.

Her shadow dwarfs me.

God, what a fool I am.

But I vow to beat her next time for real.

A psychologist would tell me I am only fighting myself.

But they are wrong. Nobody really understands twins.

Except twins.