Why I Leave

Rohatyn, Ukraine

Because land interrupts water. Because my father talks in his sleep of the Alps, what burns beyond the moon's white shell. Because I can't picture anything except needles & snow. Because crows collect in the same sprawling oaks somewhere else, roots driven like spikes through bitter soil.

Because I hear rain break in my mother's chest when she holds me. Because morning is filled with bellies, black with ache. Because I gave my faith to a canopy of sky threading clouds above thatched roofs, above a bare table. Because the sky runs out when our mouths quiet.

Because I am left chasing reds & yellows. Honeysuckle eyes in wild grasses. Because there is no one who dances in the pale husk of moon in our kitchen. Because there is no one who can render the same silence that follows a gunshot. Because when I open my mouth to speak, all that breaks is water against the backs of my teeth.