



dreams about houses and bees

Kristy Bowen



dreams about houses and bees

text/art by  
kristy bowen

\_\_\_\_ of 35

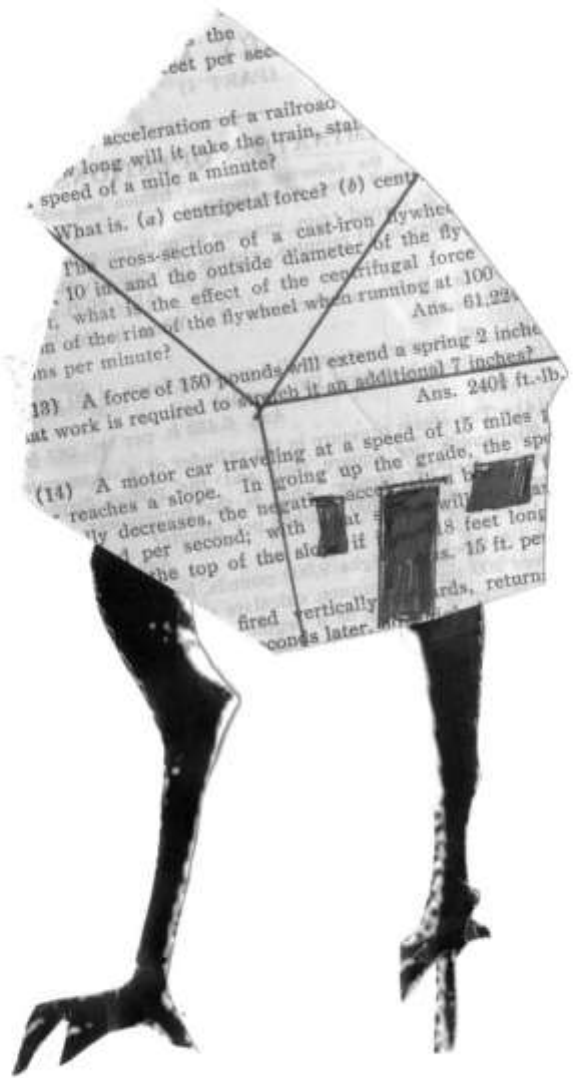
dancing girl press & studio, 2015

Poems in this series have appeared previously in *Required*, *Kettle Blue Review*, *Poetry Crush*, and The Academy of American Poets *Poem-A-Day* project.

## a house which is a kind of falling

The proliferation of *s*'s in your words make me jittery,  
which is to say, there are worse things than this weather.  
Me, I've been hiding objects in my mattress  
instead of burning them. Tiny glass kittens, dirty dishes.  
Writing love letters and stuffing it to the seams.  
Darling, I'm so dry these days I could turn to sand,  
but I have a plan, which is a sort of cartography  
of the interior, four chambered and subject  
to faulty wires. A finger tapping at the breastbone  
while I sleep. A kind of etymology, *bluegill*  
instead of *pulse*, shimmer instead of breath.  
It's watery recess.

I do this thing where I say  
*I love you*, but it's more like a latch,  
a finger movement, something I've tricked  
into happening. Or a hotel pool  
I've been crashing for years. I slather myself in lotion  
watch a movie where a woman with tiny birds  
on her dress stops talking, walks across the room.  
This is always happening, then happening again.  
Like an eclipse, or dark spot in my vision.  
She stops eating and shines so bright  
it's intoxicating, which is to say, it's terrifying.



the  
feet per sec

acceleration of a railroad  
how long will it take the train, start  
speed of a mile a minute?

What is, (a) centripetal force? (b) cent

The cross-section of a cast-iron flywheel  
10 in and the outside diameter of the fly  
what is the effect of the centrifugal force  
of the rim of the flywheel when running at 100  
Ans. 61,224

13) A force of 150 pounds will extend a spring 2 inches  
what work is required to stretch it an additional 7 inches?  
Ans. 240 1/2 ft.-lb

(14) A motor car traveling at a speed of 15 miles  
reaches a slope. In going up the grade, the sp  
ly decreases, the negative acceleration will be  
per second; with what speed will it reach the  
the top of the slope if the slope is 15 ft. per  
fired vertically upwards, return  
seconds later.

## house made of mothers

Sometimes, mother is a nesting doll, a doll faced mess,  
feral beneath her skin and skimping on the potatoes.  
Sometimes she's a hotel fire, and I'm on the wrong side  
of the door. All things sugary and greased falling into my hands.  
I can't remember the word for the body inside the body, but this  
body grows fat and luscious from the honey, from the bees  
I keep in the center of my sternum. Away from all  
the ballrooms and busted radiators of the brain. That precise spot  
in my memory, where I made an ocean of the skin,  
my hands scented like citronella and devouring tiny lace cookies  
behind the lawnmower in the garage. Sometimes I keep my mother  
in the bottom dresser drawer. Write her down on a slip of paper  
and burn her to keep away the rats. Sometimes she gets stuck in the drain.  
But it's okay, this motherdoll. This dolorous hum.

... various camps i  
Park are ne... unique names. A  
all the w... ten to thirty people, th  
buildings... over their doorways burne  
gas which have stood the test of weatherin  
ristic language has seldom caused... of  
to be replaced by better sounding...  
ual baptisms by nomadic... in di  
es the dormitory at... porter  
"ackrats" live is know...  
n" is the name...  
or "heavers,"...  
clature for... "Knotte Inne," "Steppe Inne,"  
"Hop... and "Knotte Inn" are a few well-known  
shingles that have hung for years over the doorw  
"savage" homes in camps around the loop.  
The crowd of girls wh  
"Knotte Inne" tried to ly  
tory. According...  
prowlers, th...  
that...  
o'clock... They caused the camp policeman so much  
trouble that he jokingly referred to them as "Hell",  
Belles" and the whole lodge took up the  
"Knotte Inne...  
Inne," th...  
Inne" girls who did not...  
would have been at home with the crowd in the adjaen  
building. The thought amused Nan. Norma, dictator o  
her own rules, was not in on time very often. She be

... say the dance is  
"Better "  
"All right. Be...  
"And the orchestra...  
"Say I admitted the...  
I was better. Do you want...  
Duane would go no further in his co...  
"All right." Nan sounded pe...  
ayon and Mammoth all have better oca...  
"I didn't say that," he maintained.  
"Well, Lake has."  
"I refuse to commit myself " Duane  
the matter, and Nan felt that she had  
for one evening.  
They walked down to the ru...  
which crossed the river... the Beeh...  
after the dance so...  
"Hell", Tonight there...  
to his side.  
...  
of the same thing.  
"I think it's nice."  
That evening when Duane left  
door Nan was certain Norma's expl



## house of misused potential

In a dream, I stay in my hometown and work at the grocery store on Route 51, spend all day talking to lunch hour workers and stuffing chocolates into the tiny pockets of a blue smock. Spend all day stocking cans of sliced peaches and reaching for boxes of cornflakes. You wouldn't know me then, but then again, you'd guess how well I'd get used to drifting from apartment complex to parking lots at dusk. How well I'd get used to fucking truck drivers who'd buy me dinner at the Sixer and kiss me slowly at the places I am palest. How you'd still find me throwing planters off rooftops and singing Patsy Cline in the shower. My alter ego is a pretty girl in pretty sad bar. But I can scavenge enough quarters to play her favorite song. Write love notes to her in the most perfect cursive. All day in the vegetable isle, I practice holding it all together, swatting fruit flies and hoarding the most perfect pears.



## house of beautiful drownings

Believe it or not, the ghosts in my fingertips  
love this sort of drama. The ache and swallowtail.  
This museum of unruly saints. Every time they  
come looking for broken windows, they leave  
with rotting boards. With a shipwreck softening  
in the space under their tongue. All my suicides are full  
of wasps and winsome. Lady-like and decaying.  
Once I could say I kept my deceit in my ribs, but my ribs  
are serrated. This body, like all bodies burning dry and moving  
heavily through the world. Sometimes, between the wars,  
we set things on fire in all the backyards in all the neighborhoods,  
swam in all the rivers, named all the things that frightened us.  
Drowning. Poison. Spiders the size of our hands.  
We were fast, fastened to the back of something  
that looked a lot like hope moving up and over the midwest.  
Now, I go out with my coat undone and come back witch-limbed  
and reeking of ditchwater. Swollen, swerving toward  
blind curves and blacked out houses. If unhappiness is the new happy,  
I've been shoplifting magazines and perennials. I plant them in perfect  
circles around my busted washing machine.  
Around my sequin-lined smile.



## house of open wounds

In the bedroom, I am disappearing finger  
by finger, limb by limb. Reinventing the mud daubers,  
the blotted tissue, installing locks on all the medicine cabinets.  
All along I was waiting for the opening,  
my head moon ridden and heavy lidded. I opened my hands  
and produced a dove, but the love was all wrong. The fog,  
the heart-shaped wreath, the fence I tore my thigh on, were all in small villages  
on the other side of the world where we never visit. Where the river swarmed  
and seized us. I was uncurling, unfurling, following all the wrong signs.  
Older men walked me home and I fell against them like a cat.  
In Paris, I released a fistful of petals out a hotel window.  
In other neighborhoods, it was snowing in all the wrong ways.



## house of strays

Suddenly, a hole opens in the year and we slip into it, the riptide pull of strange, lonely dogs and broken phone lines.

You forgive me if I mistake *hunted* for *haunted*,

but I do like to rearrange things in my body every few years.

Take a can of gasoline to the frayed and ghosted.

*Lights out. All hands on deck.*

Still you wonder why I keep losing my shoes in the road

and coaxing cats in the alley with cans of tuna fish and a flashlight.

Why my contentment is beautiful, but highly improbable, sort of like four leaf clovers or an ice cream truck in the middle of the night.

This tiny thing breathing between us that aches something awful.

By summer, I am slipping all the complimentary mints in my coat pockets while you pay the check. Gripping the railings on bridges to keep from diving over. Some dark dog in my throat when I say *hello*.

## house of deciduous device

By the time you find me, I am half-lost with wanting.  
Half-sprung, half-sister of loss, palming  
tiny pills and slipping out the car door and into your bed.  
Algae blooms take the pool first and then the well.  
Ruin us, run us dry and aground and half-eaten by flies.  
My wings were always transparent, but the gears  
kept getting stuck with green Sometimes, we'd travel  
the baseboards with only our fingers to guide us  
for the smallest notch or carved initial.  
The tiniest burrow in the heart.  
The seam of things opening up to swathes  
and swathes of pinkness. My insides were  
always vast, but I kept at it until it became second nature.  
Blinking and smiling and opening my chest until deer season,  
when the smell of blood was thick enough to taste.

... a constant  $g$ .  
... which produces a constant ...  
... having the value of  $g$  at that place. Assuming  
... there are no resistances, all bodies will fall the same  
distance in the same time, as can be shown by direct experi-  
ment. The only reason that a feather does not drop to the  
... is because of the greater  
... placed in a long tube



... the ...  
... 0,000,000 ...  
... earth, the distance th ...  
... earth is 6,500,000,0 ...  
... would move toward ...  
... miles above the ...  
... inch.

... close of a sc.  
... rhymed couplet of a r.  
... a train of thought. A fine  
... Macbeth's rhymed soliloquy brea

The Prince of Cumberland! that  
... which I must fall down, or else o'er  
... see my black and deep desires;  
... the hand; yet let that be,  
... is done, to see

... not light  
... he eye wink at  
... flash the eye fans, a  
... in, only natural that the m...  
... used to convey what is consciously artificial  
... when Desdemona, to fill up a moment of  
... an Iago for an exercise in praising her, he  
... in rhyme, till he reaches the famous

The extens  
one metre and at  
and prose, as devices  
characteristic, as has been alrea  
... plays. In his later works it has  
... is familiar with the use of a *trij*  
... one. Akin to this is the indication by a  
... termination of  
... found in

## house destroyed by water, by wind

Darling, even now the closets are moth ridden, damp riddled.  
No sooner have I put away the blanket, it returns sodden and  
sullen to the bed. Who is to say distrust is not parallel to affection  
in equal measure? To prefer *Would you rather? to*  
*Did you ever?* Spring distillates beneath the floorboards every  
every March, and every March, I am brittle and predictable, trawling the  
breakwater, demanding and hoarding every complement like  
wet newspaper. There are tiny plastic horses hidden in the sideboard, and I  
am afraid they are drowning. That we all are. Their sighs as  
soft and cottony as the nest of hair I keep in the brush, the blight  
that blooms the back of anything left unmoved for too long. I have  
oceans of scales that shift inside my lungs when I speak. An entire  
household of moldy accordians and curling linoleum. I place a shell in my  
mouth and hope for the best. The horses are revealed to be dead  
then alive then dead again.



## house made of ghosts and small animals

For every love song, there is a broken dove skeleton  
rotting in the eaves. A leaving, that requires  
nothing but the door opening and closing just once.  
A heaviness of suitcases and floor lamps and  
record albums piled awkwardly in the trunk.  
You see, my motives are mud dark, made of larkspur  
and longing. Soon you will find me replacing each dish  
and hairbrush in someone else's house, replacing  
*p* with *q* and mucking up the quick exit. Will find me  
ravenous and bleeding beneath the weedy undergrowth.  
For every broken promise, I give you a ring of roses.  
A prolific number of tiny mice inhabiting the baseboards.  
*Animal, vegetable, mineral.*

The terrible goblin heart of my *goodbye*.

