

THE GROANING BED

by

Jacklyn W. Potter

submitted to the

Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences

of The American University

in Partial Fulfillment of

The Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Fine Arts

in

Creative Writing

Signatures of Committee:

Chairman:

James Taylor
J. De Paoloz
Lucille Clifton
Kenit Moy

Dean of the College

Date

1983

The American University
Washington, D.C. 20016

© COPYRIGHT

BY

JACKLYN W. POTTER

1983

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

DEDICATION

Not The Groaning Bed, but a dream beyond it, is dedicated to Marchant Wentworth. The poem "Arrival" is dedicated to Richard Davis, and "Shakespeare's Theory of Angels Proven" to Joann Hanna.

THE GROANING BED

by

Jacklyn W. Potter

ABSTRACT

The Groaning Bed is a collection of poems divided into three parts. The first part contains poems that describe loss, separation, and departure. The theme of parting moves to poems in the second part that describe solitude, even isolation, mainly in a rural seacoast environment. These poems concern an introspective period and an effort to resolve issues in poems of the first part. The third part contains poems that re-establish a presence in the world, the business of living in the world, including love, work, and art. These poems emphasize those three areas of life which are deeply influenced by the experiences of the past. This part also relates to the other poems in the collection by developing the third dimension of this effort to change, that of applying wisdom gained from reflective isolation to the painful complexities of living in society with dignity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank all those who gave their support and assistance in the preparation of this manuscript, in particular Lucille Clifton, Kermit Moyer, Linda Pastan, Jo Radner, Myra Sklarew, Henry Taylor, Judith Harris, Joseph Thackery, and Barbara Goldberg. For their constant belief in this work, I thank Susan Sears, Mary Tonkinson, Maxine Clair, Chapin Vasilake and Nicole Hayler. I thank Kathy Kadane for listening and keeping me on reality's track, and Judith Freeman for her heart.

"Las Lechuzas" first appeared in Poets On: Working; "On the Island" and "Drumfish Run in Summer" were accepted by The Hague Press; "Elementary Lesson" and "Star" appeared in The Eyrie.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
I. THE PARTING	1
Telephone Call	2
The Invisible Woman	3
To the Best Man	4
To the <u>Child in the Straw Hat</u>	5
Summer Solstice	6
February	7
What the Dormouse Said	8
Arrival, 1981	9
House Cleaning	11
Notice to a Local Farmer	12
II. ON THE ISLAND	13

Affair	14
On the Island	16
The Cultural Assimilation of Aunt Belle on Chincoteague Island	18
Admonition	19
Drumfish Pun in Summer	20
Burrs	21
When a Man Becomes Time	22
Outside the Refuge	23
Dance	24
Blessings	25
III. THE GROANING BED	26
Mother and I	27
The Word's Shape	28
Cantaloupe Hills	31
Elementary Lesson	32
Rhythm	33
Recipe	34
Dick Cavett Interviews 'Sake Shange	35
Job Description	36

Mother, I Speak in the Shadow	37
After Birth	38
The Groaning Bed	39
Parting	41
Mice	42
<u>Las Lechuzas</u>	43
Shakespeare's Theory of Angels Proven	45
Twentieth-Century Dream	46
The Day Grasps the Autumn Path	47
Her Music	48
Waking Up During an Imaginary Snowstorm When It's Raining	49
Star	50

Mother, I Speak in the Shadow	37
After Birth	38
The Groaning Bed	39
Parting	41
Mice	42
<u>Las Lechuzas</u>	43
Shakespeare's Theory of Angels Proven	45
Twentieth-Century Dream	46
The Day Grasps the Autumn Path	47
Her Music	48
Waking Up During an Imaginary Snowstorm When It's Raining	49
Star	50

THE PARTING

Telephone Call

2

Hello.

I saw you when I went down town.

~~Oh-grief~~

you weren't there.

But I saw you

in between the rows
of natural straw hats
and men's better jackets.

I saw you again
behind the blue car

my blue car.

You were breathing fast.

I saw you picking black raspberries
under the first goldenrod
of sun. You reached down
then touched your pulse.

I'm sure you did.

Did you see me?

You almost broke my heart.

But you didn't.

Listen.

~~Boem-ba boom-ba boom-~~

The Invisible Woman

She walks near the sea
behind him.
Perhaps he glances back
to watch her.

Then she grows full
as the marsh-pink grows
behind the dune.

Now she is ahead.
But he cannot watch her.
Others turn their heads.
Even they can't see her
but they hear her skin singing.

~~Perhaps a skin singing woman~~
~~needs no glass~~
before her.

To the Best Man

(In tribal communities, the best man was chosen by the groom to abduct the bride from her family tribe. He was the "best warrior.")

I did not invent
this ritual. Are you coming
to carry me?

If you are strong
you will take me
away from the home
I never had.
You will step carefully
among glittering fragments
of the past, as you hand
me to the future.

Now I see remorse
rimming your eyes.
Surely, I have seen you waiting
for love, wanting its demand
to be nothing
more than a heartbeat
as one hand snaps a thin bottlecap
while the other
steadies the ice.

To the Child in the Straw Hat
(A painting by Mary Cassatt)

For three years I wandered
through some planetary bower.
The straw brim of your hat
circling toward me
brought me home.

Here in the city of winter flowers
your breath, rich as pomegranate seeds,
hardens into pigment.

I cannot speak. You cannot see.
A blind man's cane strikes the years
in cracks beside the avenue.

Summer Solstice

6

Some things moving do not live;
that car passing by me,
the man's hair fluttering,
a black curtain near the door.

I watch,
a wooden frame.

When I saw him,
my father's skin was still brown.

The lines were ^{fragile} soft and
did not force themselves

across his face. His hair was white.

He wore his ^{blue} silk race-track shirt, *the one reserved*
-and he was smiling. /

His cheeks were only as cold
as winter makes them.

*For Saturday
races.*

February

On the Departure of Visiting Writer D. M. Thomas

Mr. Thomas, you have missed
our birds, whose song
deceives us. And this gentle air,
the tendril breath
of a Judas spring.

Then your voice lulled us
to abandon "character" and find
the "image." Crowded with eyes,
the room watched your solemn
veteran hands taking care
of each cigarette. Your friend's
suicide lingered on your tongue
inscrutably.

He did not leave us that night.
And so we listened for the image
you desire, the one that prefers
death to the pleasant promise
even of your voice.

Mr. Thomas, the cold air
will return. The image is a place,
terrible and perfect.

What the Dormouse Said

Hunger begins.
Your lips curl
on the breast
then the cigarette.

Desire drove you first
to pursuit. Once conquered,
she is a shade
holding your loss,
the seeds of life.

Falling from her caress
you have missed affection.
Now she preys
solely on your mind.

Your hunger plays on.
Let your ears hear it.
Let your mouth find
its crystal cup that sings
while brain revolves in a dark head,
searches for light,
sometimes finds its own.

The sun goes up or down
toadstool clouds, a fireweed horizon --
the stars linger
into dawn.

But you turn
toward the sweet-tasting mouth
of death.

Arrival, 1981

Richard. Listen.

1 It's 1981

at the Café Don.

Flat propellers spin above the lights.

It's 1981 and I hold the earth

a pollenball cradled

while ancient throats chuckle

and a woman yells:

"Women do not own the world!"

She sighs, "I know I'm right."

4 I'm sitting beneath the atmosphere:

stuffed heads and petrified antlers.

Everyone talks to everyone. The woman

tells everyone she knows

exactly who she is.

It's very loud here. Two plastic logos

hang down on chains saying: Courage.

2 The woman shouts: "Hercules! We can't talk.

You think I'm white. You hear that song?

It's 'Beast of Burden.'"

3 On my birthday, you sat beside me.

I was intent on something. You sat

beside me, knowing nothing. You were

filling in the blanks. Before you,

fear had held me.

I did not earn the moments of your steady gaze.
I bear these silent moments now. They tremble
like an egg, a snowspun night, a widow's web
constructed to hold me perfectly
in mystery.

House Cleaning

I am on my knees.

I am counting straws.

Oh, it is so cluttered here.

I am down on the floor

counting straws, I can see the floorboards.

It is so lonely and cold down here.

I am perfectly good at counting

but I cannot get it right.

Under the rug I find

more straws, more,

always beneath it

hiding their color.

I will give them back to you

when I find the last.

I will give them all to you

because this house

is no barn.

No beasts feed here. I raise

poems from the immaculate waste

of love. It is bright and green here.

Notice to a Local Farmer

Because you are a boy
in grown-up body
in grown-up clothes;

because you are a boy
leaping fences, hitching free rides
darting through pastures
high-stepping and missing
cow pies;

because you give few gifts
because you allow no dreams
because you ask me to believe
only what you believe about yourself;

because you are a boy
very carefully falling
into many mothers'
held-out hands;

because they give you
blue-ribbon care

I give you
good-bye.

II
ON THE ISLAND

I am down
by a small ocean.

I lay me down
my own lover
whose fingers draw
the damp of seas
from valleys skin-deep,
from mazes.

The arch
of an unbroken wave
follows the light
of an upturned moon
that grins.

No lovers here.
None
except my own
hands, finger-whorls,
hips that lift
and low;

except the sea heart
beating a white line
toward these thighs,
the foam past this belly.

Waves surround waves
in the fog;
the white line
breaks, expands,
thins in a dark
with no horizon.

On the Island

1

The black coat is the Key to Fashion.
She wants it. The one with the collar that won't quit,
the mid-calf, wool, black coat:
the limit, the essence, half-price;
the black coat. She wants it.

She tries it: the perfect coat.
She is particular, precise.
She is the woman in the black coat.

See her seduce the Bay!
See her lie in iridescent foam!
The soft wool rides the waves.

She gives it back to the rack.

2

Now she has no definitive thunder.
As she watches the boats
that go for clams and scallops,
the wind slaps her
(even the wind that wears kid gloves).
She has consumed many heads
of lettuce, she has picked
at many bones of fish.

Here the ~~sadness~~ of a woman
disturbing as drizzling rain,
with no essential thunder in her brain.

She repeats a thousand motions.

She gathers her heart and body

at last, home, to the place

of her solitary choosing.

The seagulls wing before her window screen.

She wears her skin alone to bed.

The Cultural Assimilation of Aunt Belle
on Chincoteague Island

Walking behind
her walker, Aunt Belle
tells me it's coolin' up
so she'll cuff the pants.
She puts the spool in the basket
hinged to the walker.

Last week the Singer
treadle went up. Potholders unstitched,
a day's work halted.

It's fixed today.
Her son came by.

In '62 the sea rose
into Aunt Belle's kitchen.
Belle rose, too,
her legs blue
pilings all night
in the cold deep
on the table top.

Tomorrow the world is ending.
Milosz's old man
binds tomatoes.
Aunt Belle hooks
a rug from cast-off
nylon pantyhose.

Admonition

The sea acts its age;
designs its latticework,
allows the foam
its second on the sand,
an apparition of bubbles.

In the wave's shadow the jackknife
clam finds its stripes.

Now I am generous
holding a seashell in my hand,
acting my age.

Drumfish Run in Summer

Before they filet they take
a hoe to the light blue
scales of the drumfish.

They toss the catch on the dock
and flail it. The scales flip up
and clatter down like ice.

Soon the fins will flag.
And the eyes will glaze.

Only last winter, scales covered
my eyes. Now they take
a hoe to me.

Burrs

Nothing solves this problem
we have in the country
of burrs stuck
to dogs' fur.

All my words
cling to your mind.

And your thoughts
cling to your mind.

I try to pull them out.
They sting, then
crumble in my hand.

When a Man Becomes Time

I found the hourglass
on its side. Sands dead
in their stillness.

I listened. And heard impossible machines
cease within me. Old machines,
the groaning of clocks. An alarm buzzing
one final resurrection.

I heard watermen curse
a slack tide locked in the arms
of moonlight.

I saw a three-quarter moon
useless to all but weightless lovers
still moving
into life.

Then I lost count of moons
bounding on a five-foot chop
of sea.

Brine is a cutter.
Brine in the eyes.

Outside the Refuge

Light had been everywhere
until my hands
covered the sun.

Now I am charged
with darkness.
Even the needles
of the moonshot pine
drop their light,
cutting through shadow
to the sand.

Composite
like a daisy,
as tight as a green fig's hold,
I eclipse my own light.

No path gives enough space.
Soft pebbles tumble
in my chest

Still, no chaos.
Beyond the foam of the sea,
a starry aster
blossoms close to itself,
keeps a rigid stem,
rarely perfumes the air.

Dance

A hand
by the bridge
holding a ball of rice
before the firestorm

a dance
of walkers
skin draping their cheeks
darkly

dance
arms crooked forward
into the ashes

petechiae
a dance on skin
after the fireball

glass-bitten
feet follow
the gritty path
exactly parallel
to the smooth road

groundburst
black rain
bone marrow

Blessings

Hold out your hands.
Somewhere the feeder
of multitudes hangs
with his loaves.
He requires little,
an acknowledgment
of breath.

Hold out.
The sun asks
for less. Its rays select
a random terrain,
anywhere you stand.
You do not need to ask.

On your knees
you can taste the wine.
The priest blesses
your thirst.
Your only prayer
is silence.

III

THE GROANING BED

Mother and I

Mother and I go down
to the cellar where dust beards
hang from the ceiling.

Mother and I go across
the fragrant pavement after rain
across to the greenbriars.

Oh we dance
Mother and I

I go out
in the grass

not alone

Mother always and I

The Word's Shape

The first word seeks its shape
in spite of the skies
crowded with leaves and blossoms,
tables overwhelmed with daffodils.

The cat cries in search of it
while peanuts sprout again
from southern soil
to bend down and bury
new seeds uncircumcised
in their shells.

Upon the lake the patterned loon
glides across her riddled image,
her strange language striving
purer than our own.

The woman's first word
sought and claimed him.
He follows her now
as she sails foward,
her chatter spilling
like seeds.

For so long her face has been married,
holding the shape it will become;
bones ridged forward, head turned aside.
So many winters and the voice
shallow with stones.

She wants to hold
that bone of silk
its folds taut, mercurial.
Her incantations work their spell
upon his ancient residue of hunger,
his lonely and reasonable
hunger for a taste of tongue, an uplift
of the hidden bauble.

Her lips widen
with smile, her words swing
around the room. With cinnamon
strands arranged in a tangle
she holds him. His hand grasps
a stone, then drops into sleep's pockets.
Caught in the locked angle of her voice,
he falls
a rusty breather in the seam of sleep.

He dreams another night of tremors,
another woman's speechless hold.
His ears ring with another sound
beyond syllable, a woman
with bright hair glistening
on amaretto skin. A swan's-neck curve
below the waist, circling
circling, closing.

In the light of dreaming
that man can find his way
to hell or heaven. As he marks
the steady minutes with each breath,
his mother's voice scratches

down the wall. She counts her needs,
his failures. One melancholy cough
and she scorches his white stride forward.

Cantaloupe Hills

Mother, I knew you well.
From within, I knew your drift
your fall.

Still, you moved
and I moved with you and
against you. Then
I was out of round,
a filigreed cantaloupe
growing in your dark field.

^{plant}
I give these seeds deliberate ~~space~~,
a small summit. How well they know
how to grow, to spider
through the earth.
Now I put them down.

You sent a dream that fused
through my veined shell
before I spoke.

But the dream was for your life.
You made me.
Then you put me down.

Elementary Lesson

See these strawberries
make two seeds
for each one lost or freed
from its hold.

See how many seeds
it takes to make one strawberry,
one life. See how many
he is making!
Count the ones she's lost.
Count the one she's gained by virtue
of nature's sweet abundance!

She did not ask for more
than enough. These berries
do. Their skins break
out to shape a fertile shelter.
What can she ask if she wears
her seeds out on her skin?

Rhythm

Some are fingers.

Others are keys.

Fingers type "b" all day long.

Keys snap all day long.

If keys keep snapping
they win paper.

If fingers keep touching
they keep their blood.

If fingers stop touching
keys become claws.
Keys reach for fingers,
and tap the blood.

If keys click all day long
they set the rules
on territorial paper.
They set the rules
for any game they choose.

Recipe

Give someone skin.

Give another one skin.

Add caramel to the first.

Add molasses to the second.

At the sound of a tone
put the skins in a bowl.

Stir them up.

Add sugar.

Add salt.

Heat them up.

If they blend
into something new,
eat them.

Dick Cavett Interviews "Sake Shange

'Sake Shange broods
in her minutes, breeds
her poems instinctively
as a mother hen;
cannot help rolling
them past us.

Black suffering, he says, might say,
says with his eyes and the point of his chin,
is equal to the hunger of a pack of street dogs.
"And you, my dear. You were never hungry."

Her feathers quiver
and her mouth persists:

"Remember," she says,
"the princely suffering
of Hamlet and Ophelia,
of Macbeth."

Job Description

Work. Smooth
your amber hair
across your ear.

Work. Smooth
your painted fingers
over IBM keys.
Smooth your eyes
over a man and his
work.

Disguise your flesh,
but not too well.
Smooth the nerves
of the man whose coat
you hang and let
your skin speak enough.

He calls then
for coffee, he dictates
your work.
His thighs unclench
on soft leather.

He has a wife
who later smiles at him,
a smaller smile than yours.

Mother, I Speak in the Shadow

Mother, I speak in the shadow
of your tongue. I watch tears well
in the circles of your eyes.

I am arched. My body, a bow
launching good will your way.

You despair in it.
Good will rots your martyrdom.

I come to cut your chains.
You watch them crumble at my thinnest touch.

You remain locked in, Mother.
Here, death serves overtime.

I call you, more than once
Mère-sel-du-monde.
Mother salt of the earth.
I know the brine of your kiss as well.

I am the good daughter,
giving pearls of touches,
silver smiles, rings of arms
slipping around you
holding you from yourself.

Someday I will shut you
carefully away in the box
and I will strike Pandora's name
from its lid.

After Birth (still leaving
Home)

She cannot understand
the properties of fire;
sparks burn her, melt
the plastic-covered chair.

She's listless, malleable
then busy as vinyl.
She cannot remember
that glass breaks
in a second as sharp
as the one that cuts our lives.

She sits in another woman's house.
Into her rooms
she brings challis, paper, calico;
dried flowers
from the winter marsh.

For hours she eases
sleeves into their smaller holes.
For hours she folds, tucks, squeezes
soft motions into minutes
that have not quite arrived.

She begins to know
that time is a spirit
keeping all things
from happening at once.

The Groaning Bed

1
She calls to you in voices
from the garden, mysterious
heartaches of the eggplant;
awaiting your return she
is dazzled by its opaque
gleaming skin. She wants
to tell you that something
is always dying
in this damnable place;
the cucumber leaves flutter
and hang from their trellis,
white with disease. In the autumn
light the moss roses turn
their timeless clocks
toward an unknown withered hour.

And in the garden beds, congregated
marigolds force carrot tops
to the ground, the marigold wall
a low cathedral of mockery
where one green imitates another.
The nightshade burlesques the melon flower --
how cluttered the garden grows
with its offering of tomatoes
that bend and break
their lengthening vines.

2

The weeds crowd in. They mob
the former silence of her rows,
her magic risen
from carefully covered seeds.

And now she tells you it's for you~~x~~
to do the pulling and holding and binding: each day
the green fruit turns deep and heavy,
it gives you harvest and breaks
down its home.

3

On any bed
of your house
you are never alone
with that woman. Who came
before her comes before you.
As you draw near, knowing your desire,
the seeds
all the fathers
all the mothers
the children within
wrestle and shout
to life
on your groaning bed.

Parting

He arrived at evening with pink gladioli.
Stems clustered in his hand,
the stalks curved upward --
a bright cobra spreading
through his atmosphere.

She brought the bouquet
to her lips, in their fullness,
then touched his wrist. At her window
a long blade of oak
tapped its way
to bareness.

At dawn, new petals,
thin as tissue paper
raise blossoms.
which strike the air
from a porcelain vase.

Mice

A sudden movement in the night. The gray scramble living beneath the sink. Their world has a small hold on our large lives. Food intrigues them. They pass through the pipe holes down to the ground in search of it. While waiting for the digestion of poison, they tumble from porcelain to metal in search of water. They move to death, hardening their hearts.

Las Lechuzas

(Las lechuzas are like eagles and owls. At night women we know become lechuzas. We can stop the curse only if we say: "Sal y pimienta, pimienta y sal." If we say it perfectly, la lechuza falls from the sky and cannot curse or harm us. -- Migrant farmworker, Eastern Shore of Virginia)

Your hands move among the brightnesses
of growing tomatoes peppers
babies from your own
ripeness.

You bend and sweat and scratch
the yellow dust that makes
a folding and unfolding map
of your forehead.

I travel the paths I see there
along the tiny arteries that end
as sharply as your fingers snap
the fruit leaving blunt stems
pointing at sky dusk.

I bring no song.

Women you have your own.
You sing it in the bare light
of a migrant camp bulb. You sing it
in narrow compartments behind screen
doors that frame some moon.

Your husbands and sons follow
a shaft of moonlight
to work at the ketchup factory.

Rise your moon

Rise las lechuzas

above fields above the night rows

where green is black

where women speak wings

where women look down

on smaller moons that hang

beneath black leaves.

Lechuzas above me delicious fear

sovereign belief spells my hunger

Sal y pimienta pimienta y sal

as I move down Safeway rows

choosing.

Shakespeare's Theory of Angels Proven
("In action how like an angel!" - Hamlet, by William Shakespeare)

We are walking here below.
Far beneath Shakespeare's angels.

Perceiving the eye, the tiger
and the lily, he would have seen one
rare among us, who must stoop
when passing by to keep
from grazing those iridescent wings,
from jarring a celestial note.

He was an optimist, well acquainted
with the lilies and the tiger's
eye. That makes for a hopeful precision,
that getting familiar, and spending
a few days-up close, perhaps,
to a fertile flower.

So close to angels! Yet
a Devil's drama turns her smile.

Better than God, that devil knows
she hoists a beam
for heavenly mansions, she improves
the general handiwork. Jacob covets
her ladder. In her perfect corners
spiders wait clumsily
and watch her as they spin.

Twentieth-Century Dream

A hidden, scarlet rose
stutters beneath a veil of pearl brocade;
and in the dream's high parade
she sees the reaches of her desire. She knows,

and cannot be required
to forget. The dream slowly recalled becomes
a wide sound. The tap of drums
persists and stirs her morning room through spired

and angled rays. In the clear
night, the oak had been for climbing toward
a trembling promenade. A horde
of brides clutched their whirling gowns in fear.

~~They spoke their~~ vows alone,
the marriage consummate without their grooms;
their arms waving in starlit rooms,
they held each other, and called for their own.

The rose beneath the veil
signified the vow, and yet the height
terrified her promise. That night
bent down her dream, and spelled her heart to fail.

The Day Grasps the Autumn Path

The day grasps the autumn path in fire
of horizontal light. It moves desire
to the long road. Then dark has sent my feet
to shuttle gravel down a meager street
that follows every step you left behind.

You walked first through light, you entered the kind
morning that closed my face, the fainter star
from view. I press creases on the map, the far
road you travel waits. The moon has shot
a slim blade from its distant burning knot.

Her Music

On weeping men, a whisper, nearly white:
the petals that a fading lily gave.
What wild remembrance makes men wave
their arms beyond belief, an old delight
that blessed them when they dreamed in prayer?
They want a way to dream and weave it through
their weeping. See the dreams the women knew:
the children moving deep within their care.

A roll away of mist. A vacant cloud.
No light reveals divinity. Yet some
divine a moth-breath word, a tiny drum
with skins of petals trembling in a crowd.

These subtle drumbeats stirring might surprise.
Halos are circling in the gentle eyes.

Acid is Falling 49

Waking up During an Imaginary Snowstorm When ~~It's~~ Raining

A large water drop falls
on the mattress. The heart jumps,
is this the end? The walls
shower plaster dust, stains
spread and burn. Have you heard

any news? The mizzling rains
have killed the ^{loans} birds. I've opened
one eye only. The grains
of air have wheeled and stirred
their sluice of light. And when

the window finds the bird,
my eye finds the night,
its negative blurred:
a fallout of stars, then
the world's bright finale.

Star

You said sing, Daddy,
and I sang with melodies
lilting through my baby
shoelaces: down into my eyes
fell the starlight of yours.
And my red heart filled
your repertoire.

Let's hear some songs,
you said, for Red Cross
war veterans and heroes and Chambers
of Commerce. My braids
glistened and my hands tossed
kisses to hundreds of hands
clattering praise.

You said sing, Daddy,
and school days ended early
with a microphone
in my hand. My smile
and the bow in my hair
were on the air.

Perfect and best
I sang and heard your banjo
ring.

You said sing.
Read through these watermarks.
Your starlight falls from my eyes.
Can you hear this scratching on the page?

Daddy, I am singing.