TRY TELLING YOURSELF YOU ARE NOT ACCOUNTABLE TO THAT GREAT MOTH TIME

*after Adrienne Rich*

With her hand inside me the doctor announces her mother & sister are dead

Ovarian cancer *ate them up* she says then makes a sharp noise like a child pretending monster, or to snack on monsters

I too worship deadness in all the wrong ways—for its evidence

At the bar I know men who stumble around hollering out *poon* like the name of some long-bodied & pelted animal teenage boys hunt with BB guns

SHE SPRUNG OCEANS & TOLD THEM TO BE SALTED. SMOOKED VOWELS & TOLD THEM TO LINGER. FASTENED RIBS INTO A CAGE & CALLED IT EMPTY. ATE FIRE & CALLED IT NEED. CAST LIONS & ROARED WITH PLEASURE. ROLLED OUT CARPETs OF GREEN DESIRE. SHE CREATED MAN & MAN DEMANDED HER KNEES. DUG FINGERNAILS INTO THE LEATHERY SKY & RIPPED FORTH, BEARING STARLIGHT. & O IT BURNED BLUE UPON HER.

wreath of guillotines lawn bloomed from iron stars an extinct snowbird: roadkill silk asylum woven with stolen hair

Patriarchy gnarls girls into bonsai trees & shames men into sad gods

manifest desert landscape bleaching fear in & out of failing hands snow crusting the silence of a windshield atlantic wheatfields flatlining to the harbor AMERICA the shoplifter

CARYATID (n): stone carving of a draped female figure; pillar supporting a Greek building // (v): the action of holding up what heavy marble you are carved from but do not belong to // (adj): built to last through ruin but not to inhabit // *Etymology*: In a Florida mall parking lot a friend tells me the word originated in a small village; the villagers needed something pretty to carry the weight of their houses

GIRL: long stone throat of a well & creature at the bottom of a well & bucket slithering its wires through to the bottom of the well