

Shaping a Woman

Cassidy Lewis

Author's note: "Shaping a Woman" is an abstract piece about intimate partner violence and how the victims of abusers often enter their relationships unassuming.

Hold on tight—he's said this before,
As he held her like a bride, before he
Tripped on the train, and her veil was dirtied
By his black smoke. She does not cling
To him, even with his hold on tights.
Without a way to hold him back.
Holding him back—that is her kindness.
And maybe all she can do.
He has been what she could not: night where
She is morning, reminiscent
Of the smoke that gathers on a train window—
Or of the train itself, silent
Though his arrival comes all-too-soon. He roots
Himself in the lily of the valley,
She is unassuming.

Woman as weary years. As dug out womb.
Womb which has been strung
Back together after being stripped from her.
Her stomach is empty.
Man as decay. Her body blued. He believes
He can see through it
Like she's mosaic. To him she is only glass,
Whole until touched.
He comes calling himself good
Samaritan, but knows only
The anti-moral. How he will reform.