

ending #3

she says all the world's words are in me.
they fall out of my pockets like coins
roll through streets, down storm drains,
become loose change and lucky pennies.
I speak, therefore I am, she says,
therefore I create, therefore I break.
I lose all of my currency trying to explain myself.

I write her a letter and she tells me,
this reads like a love song.
because I tell her that she breaks like a wave
crashes onto the shore and erodes my words,
scatters pebble into grain of sand.
for weeks I will wake with gold dust on my pillow
despite washing my hair of her every night.

she chooses when to hear me.
she says it's a war of words, worlds, worth
I name her again and again,
and all I ever get is a mouthful of feathers.
she's delighted when I choke.
calls it art, says I'm succeeding.

I write her that love song and she says,
this reads like a suicide note,
because I tell her that her madness is music:
I can only listen, and wait for it to end.
the melodies drive up the scales like a scream
she spins ever closer to the cliff-edge, and calls it living.
perhaps I am the one singing
and she was never on stage at all.
I become incantation.
I will her to be better
to stop turning the lights off,
to ask the right questions.
she looks at me and sees a mirror
loves when I forget how to tell her the truth.

one day the mirror cracks and there I am:
not a book or a penny or a song.
she looks at my hands and sees they are just hands.
they do not hold the world.
she meets my eyes and knows they are just eyes.
I stop reflecting her.

I write her a text message,
and she says, *this reads like a text message.*
I say goodbye, and she hears the sound,
leaves me behind,
and at last I can speak.