

Unmother

Date of Death: the last of the maybe someday
that I knew would never come. Empty
hip bone cradle, a womb never called home. Pelvic
shape just another body curve.

Cause of Death: Acceptance
or defeat or the finality of time passing
or decreasing fertility with every birthday. Curdled cries
from other women's birthing bodies—the small, vocal trophy
of the stretch and pressure
of months spent waiting—a reminder
of my choice, the one spread over
the years without realizing I was making it.

Funeral: a private choice made public conversation, a question
women dodge until hair turns grey, a placenta-like sac
we sleep and wait inside of—*so, do you have children? Why not? When
will you have children? Never? Really?*
Because what is woman when she is the opposite of mother?

Life and Accomplishments: born with ovaries pink basket-carrying
every egg she would never need, the mother
in me was born to a frozen winter (mother) and a violent gust (father)
and raised as one of many aches (siblings) inside a wound.
Proudly not pregnant
too soon by a man with hailstorm hands or single-handed
handling children of my own, I waited until it wasted
the uterus, that heavy burden
sewn tight to skin, pulsating hidden flesh—
the wound of the unmother body.