

Every morning at 7:20 I would come out for breakfast, and
My mother would have already traveled around Jupiter and the sun,
Maybe even twice. I felt accomplished just being awake,
But my mother was often bent over,
Putting the dishes away or feeding the dog
Or reaching for something in a drawer somewhere.

Sitting and eating, I watched as
My mother would slowly pour the hot water from
The kettle into my thermos,
And watch it swirl around the tea bag,
Darkening until it become unrecognizable as water.
The clock would yell out 7:30 and I would
Make my way back to my bathroom to get ready
For the day, and my mother
Would just be sitting down.

Every afternoon coming home after a long day,
It felt like I had travelled backwards around the world and
Barely made it home. My mother and I would
Sit on the couch and compare our days in
Aches and pains and fractures.
The funny thing was that sometimes the fractures
Of her day would heal holes in mine,
And mentions of something funny
Would sooth her cuts and bruises.

Give it some time,
Call it 6:30 or seven o'clock,
And we'd have both come full circle back to Earth, or maybe a bit farther.
My mother would be standing by the stove working on dinner,
And I'd be leaning on the side.
She would pour something into the dish
And I would watch as it became something else, something indistinguishable,
And ask questions to which only my mother
Had answers.

Sometimes if it was late and
Neither of us felt well, we would
Make tea and talk some more.
But this tea didn't
Change the water into something else,
This tea was a flower bud that
Only opened when submerged in the warm water.

We'd sit on the couch and drink,
Talking about where we wanted our tomorrows to take us.
We would laugh, and I'd mention
"Oh that thing you do mom,"
And she'd have no idea what I was talking about.
Finally she'd understand and it would become
A joke just us would understand,
But we still called it "Oh that thing you do mom."

Call it ten or eleven o'clock when it was
Time to take the dog out again, but no one
Can bear the weight of just going around the
Block when they've traveled the world
All just in one day.

Next we might dream,
Even though we were supposed to be asleep.
We might let our memories out to play
And let them tease us with mentions
Of moonlight and sunrise and
Clean air. Often when one of us was away
We'd dream of each other,
And something that
Would become something else and
Finally something indistinguishable.

My mother sleeps on her back,
I sleep on my side. My mother speaks in a confident voice
I speak in a quiet shy voice. My mother doesn't read pop-culture magazines,
But I do. My mother only likes music that
I show her, and I only drink tea my
Mother has prepared.

I've only been out in my neighborhood
In the moonlight a couple of times,
But when I have I've always passed the playground.
In the nighttime when our memories
Come out to play, I see mine
And my mom's passing each other on the swings,
One front the other back,
And then they switch again,
Never letting the other's face flicker out of sight.

I remember the days of playing with my mother,
The days of clarity, the days when I didn't have
My own schedule, my own places to be. Everything
Was the same for us, no matter the time, place, or
Distance we'd traveled to get there.

But the funny thing is,
It's only now that our fractures heal each other,
Only now after I've carefully measured the size
Of her feet while she's bent over something somewhere,
And tried to mold mine into the same shape.
But I'm not taller than my mother,
And she has not become something indistinguishable to me.

I do not need a universe when I have my mother.