

KARA VAN DE GRAAF

Sonnet with a Wishbone in the Throat

I trussed the hen and cut the breast
clean, pliable, soft with cartilage.
I thought my mouth could swallow it
whole, but the bone went brittle, broke
through the skin of my neck like two
thorns. Its prongs scissored out above
my clavicle. Windpipe split in a perfect Y.
When I speak, each phrase kaleidoscopes,
modifies, a duet of whispers I lip into air.
I sound sweet when I want to be bitter. I bite
back my anger's flare. My voice box grows
into an echo chamber, buzzes double-alive.
Forgive me, I must say everything twice:
once to punish, once to entice.