

The Press

Mezzotint

i began with my fathers
breathing O in the waters
siblings magnetite and hematite
swirling in the ocean seeping earthwards

my mother was a mountain
in the heart of her belly
in the black in the pitch in the unlit
warmth of her squeezed and compressed
time forged ore

then they let the light in
the hunters
flickering gleams flaring white light in
belly blown blasted gouged and scraped
they let the light in
ore from the mountain
iron from the mountain
so i begin

Aquatint

oh the bright oh the light how it burned and it flared and the flash and the sparks
and the bright bright white of the flame.

so great was the heat we eased and we oozed we united it was love it was white hot
bright hot loving polyamory.

flaming for a fusing a uniting all combining we were merged married melded
hematite to carbon with manganese and silicon submerged merged cooled.

solidified we're petrified and ossified. thickened.

stiffened screwed bound blackened.

cast.

Etching

it's greasy work, all sweat and oil.

cranking my handle, small soft bellied person, white as the paper, black as the ink,
you're pushing and turning and rolling the stone and oiling my parts with ooze from
the mountain, greasing the plates and my cogs and my wheel.

i run smooth with some sweat and the oil and your love.

Engraving or, A Dream

black ink,
white paper,
a soft-as-snow
blanket

and you
place the plate
lay it down,
on my bed

black iron,
white hand,
a smooth-as-snake
stone

roll on, rolling stone

oh i crush,
and i press,
i could squash you
and pulp you and mangle you
flat

but there is only,

white paper,

black image,

job done

Drypoint

let us be gentle with each other, you with your bucket and mop over there by the wall; unseen and lonely and missing home so much, and me over here in the middle of the room, unrecognised as being at all.

let us be very gentle with each other, you over there with your heart torn; stranger in a cold land, and me over here so far from my true self i can never go home. not till the sun flares and the seas boil and the great wolf unchains himself. not till then.

let us be extraordinarily gentle and kind to each other, you over there with your soft, precarious body, so easily bruised; and me over here with my unyielding, implacable one. we are both enslaved, though no one calls it that.

i promise you, you over there with your bucket and mop, unseen and alone, far from home and so easily bruised; there will be light.