

## Pre-existing Conditions

Steffi Tad-y

When the teacher said the tragic  
& the comic are parts of the same whole,

I laughed.

More than five hundred years ago,  
Spain & Portugal divided the world in half.

As per creative advice, this needed  
embellishment.

More than five hundred years ago,  
Spain & Portugal divided the world in half  
so it was not uncommon to hear I own half of you.

(I am laughing so I won't cry.)

Like a headstrong historian, I wanted to probe  
what centuries of being owned  
catapults into a psyche

but residing in Vancouver and spending time  
as a function of money,

just plug in entities to replace Spain and Portugal  
for the moment & most likely, the hustle leaves  
you a husk.

Facing the bathroom mirror, say *Subservience*,  
a pill on the counter you swallow before daybreak

*subservience, subservience,*  
*subservience, subservience,*  
until you arrive at subversive

over and over across Mountain View  
Cemetery, over and over on Marpole,

Propped up on La-Z boy &  
gazing at Monterona's paintings

in the basement of a greying house

on a plot that refused to be sold,

I dreamt of coconuts –

smashed

and smashing on the ground.