

Canvas to Carcass

Usman Khan

He walks
In truest rain and snow,
In the farthest meadows and ponds,
In the yawning valleys and innocent creeks.
His steps are like skipping stones on a lake's surface,
With the sound of picking flowers

He walks
By starlight, dim and bright
By shadows, slow and pensive
By the harrowing, wistful silence.
His steps are as lamenting birdsong, like fallen stones,
The undertone of a blind man's beauty

He walks
Through rain and fire
Through blood and molten steel
Through the darkest dusks
And the deepest dawns,
His steps are heavy,
Like the wayward trickling of time

He walks into the wind,
The cadence of his steps a symphony,
and pauses.
He collapses like tumbling leaves,
Bleeding a trail of iridescent colors

Growing Pains

Allison Elizabeth Shields

Cramps from the morning after
you are still beside me
your cool, hair pushed back.
Good or bad I can't decide,
my back is stiff from sleep.

Eyes red,
hair matted
my fingers trace the cracks from my lips
that you filled the night before with yours

You and I talked this time
I tell myself how it's better.
I walk home,
tell myself of how I'm better
with knots in my back

I messaged you, you don't reply.
I shower through my knots,
elbows still bending,
hands still twisting,
my heart still beating.
I tell myself I'm better.
I go to bed stiff.