

Letter to My Dead Mother

Dear White Raven, Dear Albino Crow:
Time to apologize for all the times I devised
Excuses to hang up the phone.

Dear Swarm of Summer Sun, Dear Satin Doll:

You were my panic in a dark house, my mistake,
My maybe, my heart-drain, my worst curse.

Dear Scientific Fact, Dear Cake Batter Spoon.
I love you. I love you.

I knew after I fell for the third time
I should write you, Dear Mother.

Dear Pulse, Clobber, Partaker, Cobbler.
Dear Crossword, Crick, Coffeepot, Catchall.

You told me when you were 72
You still felt 25 behind your eyes.

Dear Underbelly, Bisection, Scimitar, Doge.
Dear Third Rail. Dear Bandbox. Dear Scapegrace.

How could I know -- I want to go home.
Don't leave me alone -- Blank as a stone.

Dear Piano.
You played for no one. Your fingers touched the keys
With naked intimacy.

At the science fair we looked in a two-way mirror
And our eyes merged.

Dear Wreck. Dear Symphony.
Dear Omission. Dear Universe.
Dear Moon-in-the-sky like a toy.
Dear Reason for my Being.

You were the Emergency Room Angel
In a gown of light, the injured flocked to you.
You could not heal them all. Dear Failure.

No one on earth more hated
Or loved: your warm hands, your cold heart.

Dear Mother, I have tried. I think I know now
What you meant when you said, I'm tired.

I have no song to sing to your Death Star.
No wish. Though I kissed your cheek
And sang for you in the kitchen

While you stirred the soup, steam
Licking our faces-- crab legs and potatoes—
Those were the days.

DORIANNE LAUX