

The Hermit

By Rebecca N. McKinnon

I need to hide from your searing light
I need to steel myself against your supernova
It would be so easy to fall backward into your orbit
Let myself be carried in suspension,
the threads of your gravitational power
All the stars surround you in envy
You don't even know
Your refusal to believe
creates a black hole of you
God it doesn't matter how beautiful it is
How lovely you are
I grasp myself with all the life I have left in me
I clench my fists around what's mine
A staff of wisdom and logic
A cloak of mystery and introversion
A lantern of truth shining brighter than you
A window, a refusal of clouds
A label assigned to me
The blame assigned to me
I will take it, lovely
I will curl into myself as a cold babe in the
night of you
The explosion of you could've taken me
You could've taken me
You could've taken everything I am
You could've taken it all
I lower my head in affirmation
I close my eyes in prayer
I turn away in solitude
Please whisper behind me
how it is all my fault,
the destruction of you
The gorgeous and blinding and triumphant
and hideous and deafening and ruining
of you
I sit high now
I sit in the clouds
I place my tired head on my palm
braced against my bent knee
Hunchbacked and exhausted

Can I call this peace?
Can I call this life without you
anything but quiet
in mourning?
I meditate on my breaths, truths
I hide from whatever you may be
becoming
I shrink myself,
make myself inconsequential
I raise myself,
make myself sacred
I am the most qualified to embolden
myself, illuminate myself
I will stand soon,
guide myself to the immortal
I never needed you, lovely
I wanted you, but that wasn't infinite
I myself am where I will find infinity