

## *Letters from Daddy (7)*

I never got the chance to tell stories  
of how I made you, like how my father  
used to tell stories—the colorful kinds—of how  
he made me, put me together in his laboratory.  
He would always begin in damp basement, him mixing  
chemical in flask, Bunsen burner aflame, boiling,  
then “Poof!” there I was, a reflection of elements  
vibrating out of thin air. But as I grew more into the living  
I began to head the story change, alter with each budding inch:  
chemical meltdown in one, or too much flame  
in another, but all the same configuration by his work,  
his adjustment. With you, though, My Love, it was much more different,  
ingenious, I would say, refined,  
unique. I had no basement, no cylinder of flask  
to hold the chemical, no fire. You were made  
from particles that held the framework of worthiness & strife,  
lattice of blood & spirit spewing across quiet rivers like  
moonlight: beautiful. The flame—that shimmer in Mary’s  
unborn mist, that flick—was a miraculous spark  
from an archangel’s sword weighing transgression  
on good & evil similar to our struggle, our carnal appetite  
for iniquity. So in many words, I live for you in every  
possible way to man, even when I’m not there with you.  
Later in life you will evolve into woman, a flower  
men will kill to uproot & display in vases, your hips catching every  
stride, hooking onlookers, hypnotizing.  
Your first lover will be unavailable,  
translucent to what you give in the relationship; don’t let it  
change you, harden from clay that men grope  
into their liking, cast a bold body of unshakableness  
as you enter into womanhood, your power & if you  
so happen to track down that road, that dry defying desert  
full of dunes & dungeons, then travel light

when out a week of winter you're wearing sunglasses,  
head down in compartment stores, terrified of mirrors.  
Understand that it will hurt more to leave, to lie to yourself  
saying you'll make it through those days  
scratching down blackboards in classroom you gave up all;  
realize that & run somewhere—anywhere—to singe the pain,  
the thinking that a precious baby will bring him closer  
to the idea of marriage; see him for what he is. Protect  
yourself.