

The Vitamix
and the Murder
of Crows

Jennifer MacBain-Stephens

A Dink Press Chapbook

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Cover design by John Hopper /
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Book design by K Taylor

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Printed in the United States of America

First Printing: March 2018
Dink Press, dinkpress.com

For Pete

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Ten of Swords: Star Death*

Drift into clouds
 show us

the worst

you are about to

Break.

Text from Butler, Chris and Stopforth, Kay.
Quantum Tarot version 2.0. Lo Scarabeo, 2010.
Page 47.

The Vitamix and the Murder of Crows

Prologue:

Pine and sandalwood wrap deep L bend curves
around one needle / one wood chip / one black
feather assembles ink quill / penetrates pores /
one cavity is heart trunk and defends the
innocent one husk is snow / because it began in
winter

the crows compose tea for the ceremony /
orange peels and lavender / chisel a bone
handle / omnivores are welcome on Douglas
street / a beak slashes road squirrel guts / a
pinch of cheek flesh / a thigh freckle / one ivy
leaf / discoloration grows all night / evolves into
sad mist / one crow (c) arranges hops / (r) rings
in hope / (o) is mouth / (w) is hill and valley
fifteen years ago / basil grits slide down neck
mountain / the program repeats / drips man
made elements into dream psyches / what new
neighborhood is this

sink into cotton, one blood, one third crow toe
crunch, one thirsty pull

fine red arm hair needles / a Navajo blanket /
airtight Friday eyelash / the sun fires jealous
pierces a gatekeeper / blinds brass / the first
crow spontaneously combusts / too much for a
Tuesday wingspan

Second act:

heat naked shoulders / over a burner / under
the sheets / splayed to darken / turn over / all
crow eyes closed / wrestle the sky / latecomers
stand / bound to chairs / closing credits role /
cue music cue coffin / whirligig / desiccate tiny
soul memories

One brief intermission / second crow mixes
wind and twigs in a cauldron / remembers /
a nuclear mouth welded to a second mouth

Rewind to First Act:

beard teeth grow chin to chin welts / the fourth
crow greets one dead sea scroll before the flood
went live / outside the watch tower / caw to six
/ caw to dusk / this is the sixth day of the sixth
month / clock reads upside down / stitch in
nine saves one more soul piece

Pause:

scent of fuck in hair in nails / low chair seat
backs mingle sweat on a tank top / Royal Air
Force targets one crow for practice / one to spin
dirty neat / Pandora screams petri dish poser /
the alley way is clear for a quick run into the
cemetery / tea steeped for one century / old
brain smack / the middle of swallowing / how it
shines, how it slides

Third Act:

a side bar for cohesion
the holes between stairs
the locks binding bikes

The fourth and sixth crows hold crusts in
mouths / it's sharpness proud / a new
acquisition / a treat not discovered / the
chemistry out of this world / mouth bruises /
large hands / brick thighs the rough voice of the

crow flies through fog / never knowing where to
land / Crows need other crows / like a
smooth monster skull cracking a jawline / They
don't know how to chop up their life into pieces
/ whirl around like protein powder / catch the
dust magic in air / chomp it all to hell /
rejuvenate greenery in winter / begin again two
hours later / spin Spring / like birds, we have to
drink spit every two hours / crushed by arms /
singed by sheets

End note:

The crows gather atop the last dead tree on D
street / empty wings / Does she commit to
pattern, to ritual, like the crows / make the
drive common / Funerals are never the same
and yet always the same / she knows when to
pick up speed, when to pump her legs, when to
accelerate, when to turn on the taste / exits split
fast like soup / loud music / the signs / the
letters / the trash / for the birds / when does
different become too same / is too same not

good / ends with a numb animal lying on its
back

One hour

:02

I claw up a muddy hillside in the rain in the dark.

I see the top of the hill just in reach but I can't make it.

Small chipmunks and raccoons rip at my exposed ankles, my calves.

I feel the bark on knees,

:08

the stones on shins,

the mud coating skin.

I don't know how to

rip out the shadows from my

breast. I remember a time

when I kept busy.

:11

I create lists.

I make dinner.

I do laundry.

I pay bills.

I sweep.

:21

I shower.

I change clothes.

I check my phone.

I check my e-mail.

:37

No one writes me back.

I brush my teeth.

I walk the dog.

I try to revise.

I take my clothes out of the dryer.

:48

I give the cat a treat.

I unwrap a package.

I fold clothes.

I write a thank you note.

I pay another bill.

I make my bed.

I make other people's beds.

I walk the dog.

:51

I eat yogurt.

I try to meditate.

I put socks away.

I dust off the television.

I mop. I make dinner again.

:54

No one writes me back.

I read one page of one book.

I put shoes away in the closet.

I let the dog out in the back yard.

I clean off my desk.

I throw old grocery lists away.

I read another page in the same book.

:58

I try to

I read

I clean out my purse.

I put

I feed the dog.

I drive my

I sweep

I tell

:59

I call my mom

I clean

I lay the

I change

I attempt

I change sheets

I eat

I open

I re-

I re-

I claw

I claw

I claw

I c

Inked Green Guns

the child's painting bleeds damp / a tiny animal
hides
in real time: permanent moss color on skin

manic figures aiming pistols / the tiny thing
runs
waits for a dual layer of protection / lays over
freckles

tears recede / there never was an ocean /
vixen eyes stretched among

dead minnows / boundaries / her ribs expand /
breathe in pine / centipedes run through wind
pipes /

dandelions grow feet / a flat war covered
forehead /
a foot torn / the map of the woods splayed

he meant for her to see it this way /
the needles on a tray / the malevolence /

dry lips fume into a beast's mouth /
he wants her to target

a promise of a bloodletting future /
the memory bursts buckshot /

once at actually leaving /
once when the pain grows faint—

the retreating finger pulls the trigger back /

the gun goes off in the third act

if she's a good animal the gun arm tosses a
minnow /
she smells a magical scent on her mouth later –

she cannot remember what one third taste is
like /
she returns to the forest / the dark wood /

the moss grows like sheets / the gun arm hides
/
he never pointed his guns at her but

I Dream of Rope

skinny legs scamper / no door to open this time
/ we're in the woods / we always do dessert /
no sleep only naps / think of two thick fingers
down a throat / she's not supposed to like /
instead / the possession radiates / one hand
around a windpipe she thinks of an old gray
movie / culled bedroom / ocean waves back to
how he lifted her up like a tin can / half
dropped to catch midair / kneel and rise / the
quiet except for simplicity / how she bled / her
chest felt bruised later / soreness / fingers
again / grasping the wrist with the light reddish
brown hairs / the thickness of the tree
branches / twigs caught cracks by mouths /
summoned crows to land / called them home /
the noise not in her head / justagasp / and the
noise is quiet when she remembers the
forearms / the knots

Queen of Wands: Venus*

She's unhospitable / acid hot enough to
melt lead
this metaphor at odds with beauty /
superheated courage
the boldness of her seething

Text from Butler, Chris and Stopforth, Kay.
Quantum Tarot version 2.0. Lo Scarabeo, 2010.
Page 37.

The Seven of Cups is a Dialogue Between Yourself and Images

Ace of Heads

I cannot recall / if my face is the enemy /
or an imagined starlet who plots revenge /
one face reflects balance when I am /
crashed ambulance / ravaged grasslands
/ sewn shut mouth

Two of Laurels

a skull sneers at green peace / forced
merriment is / a fragility of berries /
ready to burst / spill juice / down a white
chin / the poison exposed / rots
hibernating cavities

Queen of Glimmer

a gold cup of emeralds and sapphires /
bleeding rubies / opulent lips / hollowed out
eye sockets / I want one blue sparkle / to
lure jays / cannot fly away with treasure /
the beak weighed down / keep it closed /
starving / shine on you crazy
diamond

Three of Malice

a blue dragon corpse lurks / or is it a
scorpion? / coming to lash a stinger

into wrist / or choke legs down throats /
heartbeat panics / drown it in the river /
an inner sanctum / fire brimming

Jack of Snakes

a wrapping snake envelopes an esophagus
/ no Egyptian symbol / heavy handed
death
beast mix / never wake / plunges into
lungs / slithers around belly / fills up
from the inside / expands

Ten of Castles

pierces blue skies / no luxury / dark
dungeons / all industrial prison / no
velvet banquets / no fireplaces large
enough to stand in / always itself /
unchecked ego / stone apathy / mounting

Eight of Mountains

is it a lace? / hangs in the air like shame
/ a floating lovely / suspended above
earth's pollution / stomp the mountain /
the snowy path / enlightenment is
unattainable / rather / I am lured more to
the dragon / the scorpion / the snake
/ the crawling thing that will fight me
that I have to fight

I hear the bluest, ice wings / see exposed fangs
/ smell putrid / adrenaline coursing / coming
for me all out /

my arms open

**Dear Pete, I Thought Everyone Carried My
Void Around in a Paper Bag but Maybe it's
Just Me.**

There is a void in the desert. There is a void in mall shopping. There is a void in bad car music. There is a void in waiting for a text. There is a void in pressing too many tab keys. There is a void in retro candy stores. There is a void in pausing before opening arms to receive a hug. There is a void in choosing not to go out. There is a void in thumbing through old sticker books from second grade. There is a void in watching a snake eat a mouse slowly and the tail is hanging out of the snake's mouth for ten minutes. There is a void in forgetting to turn on the porch light and looking for a house key in the dark. There is a void in chapped lips. There is a void in subtle misguided anger. There is a void in looking at weeds but not pulling them. There is a void in the time of dusk : it's not night yet but daytime isn't over. There is a void the first night spent in a new house. There is a void in bus stop conversation. There is a void in the silence of you.

**Ace of Wands: Photon Mixed with Two
of Wands: Planet Formation***

demands (to be)
energy
pure
upsurge
electromagnetic
upsurge
pure
energy
demands (to be)

manifested

a vision coalesces

not the light bulb moment
you planned

((winter necrosis, part I))

prepare the body / rouge the cheeks / fingertips
are older in snow / the blood, funnels one last
memory / cement a tight mouth / seek an
eyebrow needle / any moment now / skin falls
untied/at least once / I was kept alive/the crows
stare into a mirrored glamour ball / insecure the
ugly/jealous of the freezing age/into beige and
teal chemical drips / the beast lies on its back /

((in another life time)) ((the brain recalls))

an antique lamp / lit
chapped lip rage instructs /
the studious side to know things from text books
/
I cannot /
let /
so many sighs escape throats

I want
to quiet / the scraping / daily chores / the
paper mate pens /
won't stop

your green circle island / lit forever
with modern art / and indoor basil / thriving
always
gleaming / Land Use
laws / all calculation / all sediment stubble /
calm

I tried to be a brick / when it mattered / why did
I ever look away? /

((winter necrosis, part II))

pry open a slacken mouth / to miss the cracks /
and smashed syllables in my cortex / I cannot
express my noise to you / so I break / they
lacquer nails / sketch me from memory / for the
photograph /for the newspaper /printed on four
color /one sunset to symbolize / the earth's
weight / will smash my cheek bones soon
enough /the worms will fall into my hair / then
spring rain / grow a new body / a new girl / a
fawn / a mass not standing / dripping slowly in
the sun

Robot Heads

tech support wires light to soot / slippery
steel breaks necks / but basil sprouts like
alien ears / green is life / ignore a white
noise dream / bicycle chains the new
Instagram / an orange rope is a sturdy
dance partner / tied around wrists / pain
is life / danced through 3pm to revive that
new coffee taste / metal is jealous / pine
scent sheets stain socks / view of
cemetery / always perfect in winter /
anticipating ultraviolet deaths /
tombstone robot heads emerge from dirt /
disc drives hum atop hair and nails / the
hoard of tiny houses creep closer / silver
fence – a black light horizon / two crows /
attracted to wire / create thievery small /
me undressing in the alcove / the silence
/ an open window / the heads watch /
shadow cat / times two / the sun /
waiting for the signal / streams in from
the East the hard drives silent / torsos
smash / where to turn on / when to press
off

Seven of Wands: Galaxy Collision*

car crash slow
draw out your long stars
cosmic dust from each other
irredeemably altered
you have stopped
knowing what you want
now battle yourself

Text from Butler, Chris and Stopforth, Kay.
Quantum Tarot version 2.0. Lo Scarabeo, 2010.
Page 35.

Opposites

boy, muscle deliberate / sketches a body with
eyes first / purpose precise as a prescription / a
sliced birch tree / multitasking through the
shredder / no emotion / no insecurity / he loops
the black rope around and around her shoulder
blades / her scapulae / the top of her rib cage /
breath and focus and forward / no / no
questions / no what if she this / or I don't know
if that / invigorating loop, tie, swoop, knot /
again shows / makes / undone / repeat when
he feels like it /

girl, a shivering bird cat / white skin in the
alcove / not wanting to need / her torso is the
rope present / like a shock blanket / he does
not know he created this need in her / he works
in a lab / always this need to fill / but with what
/ it's this, no / it's breath / no / calm waters /
a rage song / fury energy explodes / rises to
what / never wanting to undo / it's this
unbalance in the ocean / that keeps her moving
forward / but stops her breath /

On Crow Number Symbolism

The day that she thought it was over, the day she did not hear from him but could not reach out because her mouth was tied to itself, it was mid-morning and she looked for crows in the sky. If she saw a murder (*a decision yet to be made*) or two crows flying together, (*a birth*) she made herself believe it was a sign, (*one girl*) that she would see him again, (*one boy*) that he was in her future (*her authentic, clairvoyant self.*) But on this particular day, (*foreboding rain*) there was one crow, (*death*) a young one, (*trickster*) far from the forest, (*journey*) high up in a lone tree on a quiet street, calling the same caw pattern over and over again. (*opening the door to the netherworld*) Three caws. Stop. Three caws. Repeat.

No bird came.

Three of Wands : Cluster Fuck*

mind

bogglingly huge

This is effort

galaxies

box

a thousand

rounds

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Quantum Tarot version 2.0. Lo Scarabeo, 2010.
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A Wraith Reflection of You

rises up gargoyle-like from below the stair /
creates a bed dichotomy / soft sheets / fervor
feast / eight limb octopus action / get a grip /
grabtheslats / smothered twisted rib weight /
two fingers down a throat / the only way he
expresses noise / one arm pinned / she feels
like half body under whole body / wants fullness
/ wishes she could be whole for him / his speed
always at his back / the wings beating over
shoulder blades / heat to consume / conspire
against / when he smashes / incredibly close /
too much to bear / she feels the demons
stalking around the room / hovering over the
mattress / prying open her mouth / she spits
them out / takes him instead / cannot close the
loop holes fast enough / the crows drown / the
heat rising red and orange in her ears / a freight
train tunnel animal and midnight third eye / her
arms / broken birds

later / exhausted she can pin him / he lets her
/ crawl / a flesh limb insect / fingers and mouth
to taste / he's clean now / she wants him rough
and mussed / she wants him spent and filthy /
his flesh pried from his bones / arm hairs she
wants to tear out / the strands like cities close
together / the colors of his skin blend into skulls
and wheels / the lotus too pretty for daylight
transport / the shadow faces throw themselves
on walls / like religion / moves like Buster
Keaton cinema / the body storm culled / she
thought I must be different / to be here / in this
windowless bedroom / with the cemetery outside

/ I cannot tell the color of the walls / in the dark
/ watching myself watch him / who always
seems like an outsider / while I'm painted over /
the fists that punch / the tree trunk thighs / the
gravel voice / so much to outpour / so many
stories untold

Him in Parts

the man fell in pieces from the sky
first the beard hairs like rough insect legs

a van's open roof sunburnt neck,
rubbed raw –a leather crop slap

a forehead capped with bullet
thoughts, stubborn skull

the weight of no time left
widest berth crow bar shoulders

swung hard, muscle impact uniformed men
forearms wide cream staplers snap and crunch

can opener fingers
closed around a windpipe

opened clouds, eye lashes bladed the sky
a broken dollhouse sized torso

the figures always laying down
in the living room

to smother her as she wished
on the ginkgo leaf carpet

trunk thighs rushed down mountains
shifting paint can feet

limbs hammered through rain
two by two, down and down

tans and red sliver cuts
meatless meats

no truck bed to catch the sections
a search and rescue mission

bury him in topsoil
sparrows' nests, dog shit

the girl left before he landed
from a bad joke
her insides hurt that day

his belongings found later:

one ski cap
one bike lock
one dead basil plant
one angry cat scratch

In The Slivered Hospital

For Noah Hawley

the red lightbulbs in the hall spark a track suit
fire / curly hair whispers / you don't want
a piece of my moan / you want warm
animal nothing

things taste different eaten alive / the whisper
laughs / then runs face map cues / fear
the width of the voice / a hoarse stadium
now silent clipboards / we all know the
astronaut will save her in the end /
turning earth to straw to weave a golden
heart necklace

he thought he needed to save daylight and space
bars / refuses to age / asks nothing about
the brunette / what's blood thinner other
than splitting hairs? what's asking too
much x plus y? memory is word / no
parasite

only a mental monster attaches to a feeding tube

he's clever / puts all energy into tricks / there is
always a bad king in these stories / He's
locked away in a tiny corner of my mind /
facing an icy pool / so cold it ice cubes all
limb memories away / disposes my secret
body / vulture the bullets down my
stomach

hit one fake button for fakery and parrot talk
scripts / repeat chatter squirrel the same

questions / *how are we feeling today?* flow
like lava lamps jerky and hot / the
audience knows the square deaths of you
blocked off in my chest / my addiction
complete

*shhhh ...the special rose colored glasses reveal
the truth...climb on*

he drains my battery life beginning on Tuesdays
/ I have no idea how long I'll last /
paralyzed to stop it / stuck in this chair
on a cliff / the walls gasp / butterfly wings
smashed / if they are turquoise he wants
me / if they are orange I breathe fire

his lips sweet hummingbird wing beats / but
over there, maggots in the cherry bowl / I
know this song / this ritual / these letters
and particles fill me up on Wednesday /
when the air dances / when there is a
message / shake the track suits / suit up
the tuxedos

break this porcelain bowl for me / this lock

wear your portable man face / the wolf body
comes later / the ingénue knows it's not
about me / it's about her / the monster
hides under the sheets / lips open neck
muscles / straining / supplant all wants /
my stomach grows full / you know how to
feed but also how to starve

I never know which one I'm going to get

Seven of Swords: Radioactivity*

Nuclei are unstable

Create

con men

Text from Butler, Chris and Stopforth, Kay.
Quantum Tarot version 2.0. Lo Scarabeo, 2010.
Page 45.

You Led Your Wraith to My House

I always felt the scythe inside / slicing at
intestines like an alarm clock / calling the beast
you let go and sent to me / when it first comes
the growl vibration slows down / on the beach a
little girl / the tea cups turn over drum beats
against ribs / she's pretty / your brain
chemistry screams instruction manuals at you
all day / but I'm not that / a crochet cleaned
arm human in the driver's seat / hiding behind
house plants / do you look them in the eye /
administer proteins / or / suck the bloom out /
mulch soul petals

it waits outside at dusk

who are you in this Dr.'s office scenario / you
say you are at a specialist getting tests / maybe
you are drinking green tea with a girl in
performance wear / the true board game of Life
is jealousy / not knowing but not able to ask /
he stays in the picture equals the color of
bracken leaves / names like *rebel office space* /
downtrodden casino / *honky tonk America* / just
a reflection of my closed wheat grass throat / all
of the things I cannot taste when you're around
/ the beast knows this

it takes a step toward the fence

If I un-focus my corneas it comes to suck at my
neck in a cavern of my own making / holes up
the entrance / there is no guest room / just
heart sticks floating through dandelion fuzz /

and that exact moment his hand held my icicle f
in g e r s under the sheet / the memory
suffocates my forehead into loss / of course I'm
not an adopted animal / so interest wanes /
something beautiful was taken from him long
ago / this goes unsaid but I know it like trees
grow to an impasse / like all the things they
don't whisper to us over the quantum tarot guide

it got curious / then mad

watercolors burn the feeling back into my neck /
the rope burn faded / not out of the woods yet /
it's spirit hangs itself over the trail we never
walked / the pond we never swam in / where I
was sure the crane laughed like an elephant /
that gorgeous day and it's just that now she
knows she's getting out / she's clean from scum
/ the doe's eyes fall down the back of our legs /
say *come home* / the wailing disguised or maybe
there were gun shots in a high security facility /
or not / maybe it was just a dress rehearsal

it's at the door

on words it's the static's turn to laugh / the
wolf pants outside the yard / you in dark navy
ocean playing prince / hiding the little boy / the
upside down bats listen / tell the men to strap
us to gurneys / run us down the hall to player
piano sessions / pop pills / stick plastic into my
head / it's me / my incident/ but you were the
trigger / your silence the decapitation / pull my
pull tab ribs apart / write your notes on my

lungs / only pink for a spell / slam them back in
the wrong way

the mudroom swims in disease

you came for me hard body slam / *ask who I
am?* I don't know your yellow eyes and lack of
tremor / your pine core husk fills with termites
as the spring freezes and thaws toes / all you do
is escape room and slap my palms / create
cement earthquakes / trap me underneath / I
wanted in on the battlefield with the sweat and
screams / you left me at red lights / behind you
are steel traps / if I stop pounding / I can hear
your annihilation by my torso / taking me for
one last ride

it was never you he (it) wanted

stuck on the shore with the pieces of sea glass
that were too blue / a million reflections stab me
/ stuck watching crazies swim by / tongue my
temples / spit on fingers / curse my knots / they
want to dock on the moon / I cannot keep the
holes filled / sealed with twigs / trees keep
falling out my spine / curving into a sickly
seahorse / the longer you are away / the mare
wasn't sent home he just left his silence
packed in the seven horsemen's overnight
bags

the doctor is busy so it goes upstairs

It's gonna be good she said in plaid kilt
beehive hairdo I waited my whole life for a big

whale euphoria like this / now you wanna rip
the constellations from my sky / kill my light /
she said *it's like you killed me* / but / but /
they're coming for you she was sitting on a
tricycle

that exited the stage when the Bollywood dance
began / the slamming French baguettes / the
silk pajamas dive into what's real / where
they took her you'll be submerged in
Desert Storm a sidewalk payphone paypal who
isn't your pal I never know when
you're awake and we're nothing
if not awake / your eyes don't / open at light /
only memory

I'm a shadow already

trapped in gray fighting // to write
my way out

it calls me now / me not you

down on my knees the wraith is in the
room it's worse than I thought it's
anger you've starved it for so long and now
/he / it is coming for me you aren't whole
/ it suctions out my chest instead
pounding to get in, sharpen its claws on
my wrists inside the room the fires

blur the shales explode I cannot sleep
anymore so I stroke it's neck bristle the
stomping never

never

in the bedroom

stops he it wants his wings back you
gave them away he flays my shins what
did you mean when you said my love was
a vapor unreal? a crumpled Kleenex
head / more likely / who knows what I'm
about I woke up in a diorama /
there were no exit instructions the
stuffed heads looking down on me
take your time getting up / you are going
to need it the snaggle tooth smile
burns

the blood dripping down my wall now from the wraith'
sknife the violet steam
the mask

the hand off to another
it won't leave no matter what
/ I fake / lies I offer myself
now it stains my
words and veins my
tabernacle garden even the
bugs crawling in my gut
feel it there is
something else some other
crush weighing down
the roof It doesn't finish
me tonight it // hovers

it's wings in my mouth
it's tongue lapping

at my eyes flower
stench

a putrid mix tape on a
bloom rampage

After (Part I) (or adding “in bed”)

talking about Boston // his grapefruit // mulls
he liked // his dead father's carbon //
Buddhism // his melancholic growth that met
at 3pm on Sundays // The chanting // The
tramp // He turned over so he could feel her
bold on the frown of him // she crawled over his
mashed sadness into his think-tanks // his
calves // his footmarks // She saw A
buccaneer dream drowned under his big toil
narcissus // On his back she could lifeline his
chief // use her handguns // kiwi the lips
between beatnik and hardness // She listened
over him // a Xerox madwoman memorizing
skirmish // hairstyle // eyesore // the
innkeeper's stubble // the wine label // the
thread to tie it all together // the bipartisan //
the bold partitions tapered into other bold
partitions // in bed.

After the last crow beak (Part II)

Your air
and sound
a black locust
cloud you
missed the
point of
my lips.
Passed
me by
a disguise,
a fist.
You ate organs.
You don't see
what is written
on crow beaks,
scratched on
forearms.
Your sound
tore flesh.
I look for
soul pieces
on car rides,
when I wake,
paralyzed,
nothing fits
together. Wings
numb.
Talons
flat line.

Acknowledgements:

One early section of “The Vitamix and the Murder of Crows” first appeared in *Thirteen Myna Birds*.

“The Vitamix and the Murder of Crows” (in its entirety) and “A Wraith Reflection of You,” appeared in *Cosmonauts Avenue*.

“One hour” first appeared in *Prelude*

“Inked Green Guns” first appeared in *Bad Pony*.

“On Crow Number Symbolism” first appeared in *Entropy*.

“In the Slivered Hospital” first appeared in *Plath Profiles*.

“I Dream of Rope” is forthcoming from *Dryland*.

“The Seven of Cups...” tied for first place in *Spooky Girlfriend’s* “7 inch single” poem contest.

“winter necrosis (parts I and II)” first appeared in *e*ratio*.

“Dear Pete...,” “Robot Heads,” “Opposites,” and “Him in Parts” were first published in *Eunoia Review*.

The poems “Ten of Swords,” “Queen of Wands,” “Ace of Wands,” “Three of Wands,” and “Seven of Wands” first appeared in *TL;DR*.

“You Led Your Wraith to my House,” first appeared in *Datableed*.

“After (Part I) or adding in bed” first appeared in *Jazz Cigarette*.

“After the last crow beak” first appeared in *Streetlight Press*.

Notes:

The poems with asterisks are found poems from *Quantum Tarot Guide*/version 2.0/ Kay Stopforth and Chris Butler, Lo Scarabeo, 2010. Printed by CT Printing.

In the found poem on page 21, the word “Fuck” is the author’s own word.

The Suit of Wands is rooted in passion and there is also a spiritual component. There is no in between. One either commits to an action or does not.

The Suit of Swords is rooted in opposition.

Jennifer MacBain-Stephens lives in Midwest and is the author of three full length poetry collections: "Your Best Asset is a White Lace Dress," (Yellow Chair Press, 2016) "The Messenger is Already Dead," (Stalking Horse Press, March 2017,) and "We're Going to Need a Higher Fence," tied for first place in the 2017 Lit Fest Book Competition. Her work has been nominated for Best of the Net and the Pushcart Prize. She is also the author of nine chapbooks. Her chapbook "She Came Out From Under the Bed, (Poems Inspired by the Films of Guillermo del Toro)" recently came out from Dancing Girl Press. Recent work can be seen at or is forthcoming from Prelude, Cleaver, Kestrel, Yalobusha Review, decomp, and Inter/rupture. Visit:

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