

**his is how i love**

*(interwoven with lines from Devon Roberts)*

I couldn't believe the crowd you drew,  
that scuffled morning at the museum.  
The only place you dared expose  
what plays out in your twisted head,  
I had felt morally obligated to bare witness  
to your newest creation.  
You always had a great sense of color,  
despite holding a soul that seemed so gray.

Your father is the one  
you credit for all of your work.  
*Yet seldomly, speaking of polite imagery,*  
you cast a shadow over the way he ran away from you,  
the way he fled to New Mexico  
with the big breasted shrew he had called his "amante."  
Yet you wouldn't see it,  
as people come from far and wide  
to look at your canvas on the wall.  
A priceless beauty,  
a girl on a swing, being pushed  
by her loving daddy.

*You swallowed half  
the room in this masquerade.*  
But not me.  
I refused to be watered down  
because I know you.  
I know what kind of painting you wish to create.  
I know what kind of shell shocked, introverted yellow belly  
would hide their scars and bruises into the chains of a swingset,  
claiming that their daddy loved them.

*A protector, hung from the ceiling  
shines down a vision of  
home movies played in reverse  
and a voiceover explains  
what it feels like*

*to drown.*

Drown in lies? Drown in sorrow?

Drown because he threw you

into the pool and told you to “shut up and swim.”

when you still didn't even know how to float?

You asked me why I came to see it

despite knowing it's fraudulence.

I tell you it's because this is how I love.

To climb inside

*where we would cross our legs,*

*hand muff each other's ears*

*and alternate humming our*

*favorite nursery rhymes-*

the same ones that he never sang to you.