

Divinity (How to Write the Body)
Kara Knickerbocker

In my religion, the body is a temple.
I was brought up in the clean walls of my skin,
bones pillars of god. Somewhere
spirits could live, never paying rent.

They come and go as they please:
My mouth a door that never closes completely.
Did you know every day there is a baptism-
the way I drown out so much?

What are the things you stopped praying for?
And don't feel guilty. Unclasp those hands.
There is too much we cannot offer, even ourselves.
Line up your losses on every pew and listen.

They will tell you the body is a temple
but my body is an empty home I barely know.
I want to open up the locked windows in my chest,
see the blue light like a bird rush clean through.

Kara Knickerbocker is the author of the poetry chapbooks "The Shedding Before the Swell" (2018) and "Next to Everything that is Breakable" (2017). Her poetry and essays have appeared in or are forthcoming from: *Poet Lore*, *HOBART*, *Levee Magazine*, *Portland Review*, and the anthologies *Pennsylvania's Best Emerging Poets*, *Crack the Spine*, and more. She currently lives in Pennsylvania where she writes with the Madwomen in the Attic at Carlow University. Find her online at www.karaknickerbocker.com and on Twitter @karaknick.