

[Mehrnoosh Torbatnejad: Two Poems \[1\]](#)

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Wisteria

He would forgive me, I am sure, when my
mother returns to the table; rustic bread
in toaster, a steamless cup of coffee beside
a plate of curdled yolk, the kitchen curtains
swelling with a wind that only the supernatural
know; before breakfast, she cooled my broiling
skin with a cold palm caressing my back—please
be a mountain, be a mountain firm beneath
the blizzard of grief, a camouflaged soldier rising
from the trenches of mourning, a lioness, my lioness,
she cries, stay steady in sunlight fading, or just be a cub,
be a cub I carry in your vacant savanna, be Ali
shuffling, uncornered in the ring, be a tree,
be wisteria, be dogwood, be red maple and
embarrass the most brilliant star, please
be a climber and climb until every pixel
of the sky's bloom falls directly into your view;
I will forever rinse this cloth, she says,
and temper the fever that plagues you, but be—
is everything I cannot do, as dawn dangles
outside the circle that chokes her pleas, and
in her silence is the sound of a thousand hearts
splitting; she did not love me enough
to forgive me, not like the god who understood



October

After I tattooed verses into my bloodstream,
followed capsules into their buildings,
buoyed in the company of worried colleagues,
I transferred my money before I finished writing
thank-you letters, thank you, thank you, you did your best
(I'll miss the quiet flakes, caffeine, making you laugh)
Then I filed papers for impatient clients; do this the right way
Leave no body in query; this is the right way
Clear confusion and debts, supply answers before anyone ponders
I fed the birds and scrubbed between floorboards
I folded scarves and sweaters for the poor; each day I pushed the checklist
and a dot of glee grew in my throat, like a pill, the closer I reached
October. I sat on a bench across from my home, with coffee

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Dust suspended in a beam returned when I stopped asking for it

My phone in the other hand, buzzed; the dot, a point, now an exclamation—so I waited



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 - “Temple of Baal, Starry Sky”
 - “Colonnade in Temple Precinct, Night”



Mehrnoosh Torbatnejad was born and raised in New York. Her poetry has appeared in the *Missing Slate*, *Passages North*, *HEArt Journal Online*, *Chiron Review*, and is forthcoming in *Natural Bridge*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, and *Pinch Journal*. She is a 2016 Best of the Net nominee. She currently lives in New York City and practices matrimonial law.

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