

Fierce This House
By Caroline Rothstein

I will be bigger than heartbreak
I will be stronger than the empty choking guzzling my chest
I have sat alone at the largest canyon edge in Southeast Utah and felt infinite
So, I will not be afraid

I will love this love's extinction into the depths of the universe
I will scout my own way

I will birth this gully in my throat into a thousand redemption songs and
I will bleed light from the contours of my eyes
I will march
I will march
I will march
I will eulogize every now abandoned kiss with
the sanctity of a marriage that will never be

I will sit this shiva
I will grieve this death
I will let my spirit stumble
I will rise again from breath

I will prevail
my heart will gift a thousand doves
to the outskirts of the universe
and I will call this freedom
I will call this love

I will hold myself
through every shiver
in the bathtub
in the shower
on my side of the bed
on the subway platform
on the phone with Chloe
in the car with my sister
on the curb of 14th Street and Avenue B
I will weep myself into tranquility
I will bless my goddess self
I will rise from this unshod journey
of what might otherwise become my blistered feet
my feet are massive
my feet are planted in the ground
I will not walk across the desert

I will lift into the clouds
I will stretch the tongue that used to kiss him
and thrust it with the fervor of a thousand ancient echoes
chanting to the full moon
I will be the full moon
I will light the sky
I will not hold back
I will not silence myself
I will not acquiesce

I will gift myself survival
and look back one day and know
I never even questioned
if I would come out complete

I will plant this foundation
I will fierce this house
I will burst this roof

I am not afraid to crumble
and if I cannot keep my words sacred,
I will forgive myself
for I am no saint

but I will be my own savior
I will carry my whole breath
I will rise into the sunset
I will, empowered, resurrect