

Us, Destructively

By Lily Weatherford-Brown

You say you already felt dead;
no features, no details. Gray & clay-
like, a Tussaud figurette. Frozen in space.

I try to stare at the air around you— like
lanterns on the highway, aglow & white—
I try to be as brave as you.

This is the grass we once sat in, it's yellowed.
As I walk back to the yard, the swing set
rocks without a body, nails holding it together.

I bury every footprint, & regrow the grass which
withers brown in Fall, weeping off into the streets,
blustering confetti in the wind, smells sweet.

How am I supposed to keep it from rocking?
The swing. Which sings into the blue air
that you are gone. Cruelly, *Gone, Gone*.

A man on the ground. He's crawling. Maybe
he scratches his initials into its steely beams
He tries to distract himself with frivolity.

She sun's blood orange on the cheek of sky,
cradling it. You would have thought
it was a fire. We would have chased it.

Can you not see the red streets,
filling with acid, corroding? Everything's red
& bright like you're burning it. Burning down.

I'm afraid of blisters so close to bones, but you love
when skin becomes purple, bubbling, volcanic.
Did your body become a knot until you walked away?

When the sky's finally black it's quiet. Maybe
It'd been quiet all along. You said you
already felt dead. & the swing rocks. & rocks.

Lily Weatherford-Brown is a Youth Poet Ambassador of Allegheny County, 2020-2021.

“Us, Destructively” is used with permission.

[City of Asylum](#) received a [RADical ImPAct Grant](#) from the [Allegheny Regional Asset District](#) (RAD) for the project [All Pittsburghers are Poets: Poet Laureate Program](#).

[Urban Word](#) is the partner for the Youth Poet Laureate of Allegheny County, an official member of the [National Youth Poet Laureate Program](#), led by Urban Word.

