



the

birth

of

Thomas

Davis

poems by

Thomas Davis



**The Birth of Venus Davis**  
poems by Venus Davis

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*"...you don't know very much about your own daughter." -  
Molly, Uptown Girls (2003)*

# I. **Dionaea Muscipula**



**So was I, empty without the ocean.**

I was a little girl once  
with lakes in her eyes, oceans in her lap,  
howling wind between her ribs.

An ecosystem of pain existed  
inside of my bones.  
And I never knew why.

Until one day, I felt it.  
The days shifted into nights.  
It was Sunday everyday.

The monsoon stopped for years.  
And I knew then that the body of water  
was never a sign or a threat but just an expression.

It was when the drought set in,  
that as empty as a hole,  
so was I.



## **Pretty**

Every bone in the human body,

all 270 or 206,

are hidden under cement-like flesh,

every bone except your teeth.

If you meet a person at three, they will  
have all of their baby teeth.

By age six, they'll start to lose them.

At twelve, they'll have all of their adult teeth.

And at twenty one, they'll wonder why they didn't bite  
or form the word "help" when they had the chance.

They'll think about their teeth for minutes, hours, months.

How their brain went numb for seconds while a cousin  
touched

skin that is no longer there,

ripping irreparable gaps in their memory,

causing imaginary spiders to skitter up their spine at  
random,

and being the first to make them feel like being a woman  
is about being violated.

And teeth are meant to change so, like a woman,  
they may sit still in her jaws and just look

Pretty.

## ***After Uptown Girls (2003)***

Eight. I am in the teacups  
spinning round and round  
until my shadow looks like a tornado.

Feeling like sewage is bubbling in my gut  
for every turn of the porcelain cups.  
Like the rise and fall of the moon,

I forget about R when he is gone.  
I lose track of how many teacups there are in total.  
Maybe 15? I can only count to fifteen.

R tells me I look 15. I wonder if it is eight fifteen.

Hours pass like hammers on my skull.  
The weight of time shifts,  
I'm getting out.

He holds my hand like he is holding me down.  
*"You're so mature for your age"*  
His voice is grimey like sewage.  
I get out like I'm 28.

**I hate to be the bitch with mommy issues  
But here I am again.**

Mother, if I could write to you with honest words,  
I would tell you how I miss you.

But not the chokehold distance you bear,  
the idea of a good person  
that I sense beneath the baggage.

The one who waited up for me everyday after school.  
Helped me with my map of Ohio project.  
Told me how she loved my curls.

I would like to get to know her.

It is too hard to love a shadow.  
Too tough to know an idea.

## Eyes

You are a hawk playing god,  
glaring and taking notes.

My eyeliner is just a jagged line.  
The shirt I'm wearing clings to my rolls,

like the plastic on ready made cookie dough.  
My blush is too thick.

Skin feels like rust that  
not even a mechanic would touch.

You sit atop your perch and I float to your side,  
a ghost leaving my own body.

And you enter my head,  
eating at the dirt covered worms of logic.

Feeding me gargled leftovers so that I know  
my worth.

## **The Pink House at the End of the Street**

We hid behind curtains of hair and cloth  
to kiss, a forceful dance between innocence  
and stress.

Touching pink areolas and taking stake in them  
like the man on the moon.

Tongue touching clit, floor creaking like the hiss of  
a cat.

Gasping for air, pretending to moan, feeling new to  
my own bed.

Vomit on the tip of my tongue, silence floating  
around my words.

I wished on still stars that night, praying that  
we could go back to playing with barbies and  
the mickey mouse pancake game.

Instead of playing adults between the covers  
where my words turned into salivating gibberish  
and meaningless rejections.





*“For those who fight for it. Life will have a flavour the sheltered will never know.” - Wise Man, Sucker Punch (2011)*

## **II. Broken**



**I am a chameleon /**

hiding between a greasy fryer /  
and fresh french fries

Bulging eyes / darting /  
between sanity and money

they are flies and I can only eat one  
But before I can even choose

the vine snake/ **him**/ unhinges **his** jaws/  
a predator/ and prepares to eat me/

I am *sexy / looking fit today /*  
**his** prey /

my eyes dart  
/back and forth/

sanity and money fly/  
out of the sliding window/

a tear falls/ down my leathery cheek/  
and I am/

/consumed/

## **You tell everyone that I'm a bitch for saying no**

When I try to talk to you,  
my mouth fills with clumps  
of white brittle hair like floss behind my words.  
It picks apart my message to you,

“Get the *fuck* away from me”.

I feel it hiding there until everything is squeaky clean,  
pristine, and *right*.

I am kind when I speak to you because my legs  
wobble in place like a dog that's afraid of the vet.  
You have the power and you hold it like a gun.  
Shooting me by surprise when I think I am safe.

Your absence is a treat and then suddenly you sneak  
by and it is clear that I am the animal and you are here to  
*tame* me.

And I just have to sit here because nobody feels sorry for a  
*bitch*.

## **Sometimes I am just like him**

When I eat a pomegranate, I cut the red ball in half.  
I don't feel sorry about puncturing it right to the core.

I don't feel sorry about puncturing it right to the core.  
Her seeds are for me to enjoy and her to forget.

I eat what I see and then I crack the halves in half and find  
more.  
Some tart, some sweet, some tasteless.

And then I crack some more and eat all in sight.  
Until she is nothing but bloody barren craters.

I feel powerful like I have something to prove.  
Like I am somehow winning in dominance by defeating her.

When I eat a pomegranate, I cut its beating heart in half.  
I don't feel sorry about the corpse that lies before me.

*To my enemy, the Sagittarius*

Think of me when you are fucking an artist,  
and she is painting your parasite  
As you tell her where to shade her trust

When your honeyed words pile up in stacks,  
And your bed is now the couch at midnight,  
think of me when you are fucking an artist

When your gears are shifting towards climax  
And she watercolors you the greenlight,  
As you tell her where to shade her trust

Think back to my panic, my anxiety attack,  
When you kept caressing what didn't feel right  
Think of me when you are fucking an artist

And you coerce her hand to paint abstract  
But she is too scared to say no outright

## **Oyster.Body.Of.The.Sea**

I've never met an oyster with tan skin before  
I saw it for the first time.  
Someone who cracks open their shell,  
revealing the skeletal remains of pearl.

No they are an oyster to be consumed—  
peasant exterior.  
Dirt rich full of impurities like acne inside of acne.  
Vomit swirled in vomit.

Hairy genitals wrapped in blood.  
Ugly dangled beside disgusting.  
I've never met an oyster with tan skin before I saw it.  
The mirror on his ceiling.

In missionary,  
while positions change,  
phases of the moon,  
I am haunted.



## **After Sucker Punch (2011)**

Some of you will never know  
what it's like to crawl on your hands and knees  
to the nearest pleasant memory.

Holding in your tears,  
any vulnerability is a weakness.

You touch gold,  
think you've found safety.

Only to find out,  
you were dreaming.

And your world is just as dangerous  
as the war in your mind.

## **Dionaea Muscipula**

Your rotting breath burns men upon contact.

Spindly little legs crawl up innocently hoping for a crunch, a  
taste.

Melting into the moment.

Building a campfire in your mouth just for you to say

“No.

I am not a home for you to live in,

not your resource to consume.”

And so you bite their heads off.

And you like it.

*"You're growing tired of me. You love me so hard and I still  
can't sleep" - Mitski, A Pearl .*

### **III. One Day, One Year**



## Desk lamp

Rose used to leave  
the light on when she went to bed.  
Not the big overhead light,  
but the small whispering  
shine of her desk lamp.  
Whenever I'd sleep in her room,  
the cradle of her shadow on  
the wall would shiver  
as she held me closer to her.

We spoke in whispers  
or not at all,  
but those shadows on the wall  
echoed everything  
that stuck to the bottom of our throats

I watched them slightly  
shift and then cling back  
to their places in planetary patterns  
when she held me as close as  
she could like how the sun  
can't bare to be away from the earth for too long.

And I scrutinized their  
movements when I'd lay on her  
long golden hair and  
she'd push me over to fight the pain alone.

Rose pulled me into  
the time warp of childhood fears - of monsters and goons.  
Of my own shadow.

That dark menace that rides  
steadily along my skin with  
every movement  
I make and  
doesn't let go until the sky caves in to it's melancholy  
treasures.

I wasn't her lover then  
but the ghost that lined her body.  
If the light of the desk lamp hit me  
just right I could be her plastic sex doll  
wanting to glitter over every orifice and touch tenderly.

Or I could be her own personal monster.  
In a sepia daze the dark dancers  
on the wall faded.

Shone away by a light angled at the monsters  
Sometimes I catch myself leaving my desk lamp on,  
That warm nostalgic shadow,  
its grace around my arms.

But my eyes no longer greet any dark menace or dancers.  
Or the long golden hair of a flower that harbors a thorn.

## Iridescent

*"If you would let me give you pinky promise kisses,  
then I wouldn't have to scream your name atop of  
every roof in the city of my heart. If I could see you.  
Once more to see you"*

*- Once more to see you, Mitski*

I find myself shouting your name

not from fear

nor from fire

But because I've forgotten what it's like  
to hear you so close to my tongue.

Your name,

an oath to sexuality.

A guide to the other side.

One rushed

home for a

loner.

Far  
from reach.

A kite.



## **I'm just your problem**

My phone chimes your name.  
The glowing syllables of  
"hello, how are you"  
stare back at me.

My guttural response is to tell you  
how I felt faint when you kissed him  
in front of me.

How my throat ceased word production,  
my tongue a useless lump,  
and my stomach dropped below my bed.

I felt sleep rain over me like a warning for worse to come.  
And in the dream plane, I sat on my porch, withered and gray  
until you passed by.

And you took hold of his hand.  
Still young.  
Still nice and pink.

So the next morning, I write back

"fine and you?"

## Forest Green

Your moss covered snake tongue makes  
its way down my body  
Cocooning itself in every orifice

Tender at first  
but poisonous as time delays  
I can feel you,  
the parasite in my stomach,

Making figure eights inside of me  
Calling me beautiful, gorgeous  
And meaning to call me

Steaming in an empty room.  
Meaning to call me nothing  
Meaning to not mean anything

Because to you I am just another  
body to feed off of  
Just another log to sneak under  
Just another anyone

## Copper

If I could plant your seed in the ground,  
a war would grow from the droplets.  
Vile, nauseating paint thinner fumes  
would fill the air.

This time, it would be your fault  
for gifting me a piece of you.  
I'd cackle in the flames.

But at least I would know  
that a piece of you made  
me feel something good  
this time.

## **The verb and the noun**

Everybody wants the peach (to be) pink  
and clean and pure.

They pretend it didn't grow  
with caterpillars crawling in (and) out (of it) -  
calling it home.

Venus Davis is a 21-year-old queer black writer from Cleveland, Ohio. They are the editor in chief of *Periwinkle Literary Magazine*. They are a former poetry reader for *Random Sample Review* and *Gordon Square Review*. Their work has been featured in *Marias at Sampaguitas*, *Royal Rose Magazine*, *Ayaskala*, *Crepe and Penn*, and many other publications. They are the author of *Sensitive Divination*, an astrology microchapbook as well as the microchapbooks, *Blue* and *@ngel number(s)*. You can find them on social media @venusbeanus.

[twitter.com/venusbeanus](https://twitter.com/venusbeanus)

[instagram.com/venusbeanus](https://www.instagram.com/venusbeanus)