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Believing is art

unauthorized self-portrait #1 in her words

*abide*  
*crave*  
*yearn*

every day she falls  
in love  
and every night  
she falls  
in one of my  
dreams

*allure*  
*sift*  
*surrender*

it was Paris  
she had a smile  
I knew  
was for me

*untold*  
*stray*  
*asleep*

and it was brilliant

what it's like to fall in love with an artist

she'll paint tomorrow in the corners  
of every word:

*auburn,*

*brilliant rose,*

*deep magenta and viridian*

you will have no memory  
that doesn't remind you of the creation  
of spring

she can rearrange the sky before you realize  
there is no where to go  
but the beginning  
no where to stop but the edge of a river

no where to be  
but on the flat of a palette knife watching the earth  
spin around her sun

Paint by number portrait (number nine)

*32 tea green*

a plaid dress and braids  
the angle of the horizon  
when it's bitten by the moon

*28 tangerine*

the wind recognizes your voice  
words fall into a blank sky  
break into slivers of desire

*16 prussian blue*

take me, bit by bit, swallow eyelash  
ankle, knee, the soft skin of my wrist  
let me live under your skin

*22 peach*

you know how to capture  
a cloud, move it closer to earth  
the curve of your calf is sanctuary

Paint by number portrait (American sentences)

*23 cornflower blue*

imagined sins are the only ones the sky allows us to commit.

*28 dark coral*

because the sun is jealous it wishes it could have one night with you.

*31 lavender rose*

every poem ever written reminds me of the smoothness of your skin.

*24 sangria*

when you are my only thought, I can feel the curvature of the earth.

*12 teal*

dawn kneels at the sound of your voice and I can't remember loneliness.

## Chinese Brush Experiment

How many confessions will I need before the last drink will do its job,  
why does it take so long to erase two memories-one: you in the front seat

head tilted back and a half smile thrown at me. Two: is you on the sofa  
bare feet curled under you, one tear crawling down your cheek.

How many times do I have to drive east then west then back again, waiting  
for the gravel to wash out of my throat. How many numbers and letters

does it take to spell you and why can't I ever find the right combination  
to include me. Why is it so hard to add up sums when it makes no difference

if it turns out odd or rolls over even--why do I pretend to know the answer  
when all you ever asked was that I look for you when I got lost.

unauthorized self-portrait #2 in her words

*serene*  
*soothe*  
*murmur*

I feel  
the soft curve  
of tomorrow  
cupped in her  
hands

*shelter*  
*adorn*  
*enfold*

willing to take  
a risk  
I'll kiss awake

*slumber*  
*drape*  
*adore*

every secret  
asleep in her palm