

This is the Poem Where I Rewrite Your Story

morning your little-boy-mouth shaped a vowel the geese couldn't spell
only sharp letters engraved into the sky your tiny fist in mine like a cherry
stone tucked inside my cheek watching your Daddy returned to the dirt
where he belonged you sniffed & reset your jaw abandoned my hand
for a dandelion stuck underfoot so serious you popped off its head &
watched it drop

evening the shelter holds so many bodies you shiver away the cold
your breath's cadence uneven rapid then slow taps its code against
my cheek as you sleep murmurs & moans transcribe the phonics of
sorrow into the air how to decipher this four year rune how to extract
this narrative taken root my fingers search for truth while I trace the raised
hieroglyphs on your skin

dead of night if only I could crack open your sternum shake out its
burdens like splitting wide the rocks and trees held together by God's
Word if only I could unravel your father's secrets wound up inside rip
out his wormwood and snakeroot I would re-inscribe your name
as a charm onto your still-growing bones