

**this is not the sound of a new man**

it's like the last dregs of tea where  
    the honey hits the back of your throat  
slick and sickly and it's then that you realize  
    nothing's been stirred properly  
after all

the walls crying out for reconciliation

the twisted vault of your headboard reeks  
    of spit and a closing door  
and i hear the neighbors fight upstairs  
    the detonation of their words slurring like a music box  
the glass smacking the floorboards snaps me back  
    to the arm slung around my waist  
each hair on your arm could be mistaken for a blade but  
    i've never been shy around a sharp edge

every time i open my eyes a different lover  
    a carousel of wanting and the walls  
are leaning in like they want to tell me a secret  
    and her lips part but all i understand  
is an engine running  
    and a promise to leave the curtains drawn  
horizontal and cloying  
    to keep me in the dark as she wilts fantastical back into  
the light of day.

violet maxwell (she/her)