Brittany Van Ness

Blue

I used to say that my favorite color was yellow.
I like yellow because it reminds me of sunflowers,
and I've always enjoyed getting lost in the vibrancy of towering plants.
Standing in a field of sunflowers makes me feel safe and small.
Every time I think of yellow, I see the sun ––
and I used to think that if I liked the color of the sun,
I could convince myself to feel its warmth every time I felt cold.
I could daydream of summer and remember the feeling of yellow beams swallowing me whole
during all those family vacations when life still felt like something I wanted to be a part of.

And then I met you ––
and the first time I looked into your eyes, I knew I had replaced yellow with blue.
When I saw the blue in you, I felt like I was swimming in an ocean that belonged only to me.
Blue let me be free from the lungs that shackle me to land;
et me drift off to the only place on this earth where I truly felt I truly felt at peace:
the place that made me feel calm like the sight of the sky during the eye of a storm.
When I saw blue, I could remind myself it was okay to breathe.
If I looked into your eyes, and they were a shade brighter than yesterday's blue,
I knew I was doing something right, and that gave me a reason to go on with my day
and forget about the cloud that hung over my head and held me
in an impending storm that I never know how to shelter myself from.
Your blue was my umbrella.

But then I met him ––
and he reminded me how much I love the color black.
Without hesitation, I let him take me back to that black
I had first found at the bottom of a bottle.
My promise to myself to remove black from my life for good got thrown back in my face.
As we shared that red-black wine to kill awkward time,
I fell straight back in love with all that black had to offer.
And when I came to from the blackout that I knew I'd eventually slip into,

I found myself between the black sheets of his bed,
shuddering beneath the heavy weight of his silhouette and the dark
black of my regret;
I prayed that it had all just been a dream.
But it hadn't ––
and I wanted nothing more than to fade into the black light of death.

Because I knew when I told you what I had done, I would never see
blue again.