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Space

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SPACE

I've always admired
my friend's ability to
shape her own noise.

I write pages of
spitting words and sharp pictures
before I can hear

anything other
than the blood and breath of me,
the not-noise I am

when surrounded by
the world's chaotic ramblings,
sounds I cannot tame.

She takes the noise in
fists made of iron will and
pushes it inside,

into her chest made
of ivory ribs and steel
sternum, dauntless strength;

into her mouth, tight
against the vibrations of
words she refuses.

She rolls it with her
tongue and clamps it between her
molars, chews on it

until she makes it
into a shape she wants to
spit out—then she does.

I chew and shape, heart
loud in mortal ribs, kneading
and needing new words

to pull this noise from
me. I can feel it shaking
my bones, rattling

through my mind like chain-
toting ghosts, choosing words I
refuse. I bite down,

grind my teeth to shape
the noise. But when I would speak,
I find I'm out of