

BREAK, IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Most days its an unrelenting glass
contracted like a swallowing throat,
liquor-store counter thick,
hollowed out just comfortable
enough to fit a bus through,
my path pre-determined & translucent,
though the air a heavy opaque
in my lungs.

The casing is hardly detectable
save the way daylight is warped,
arching into a drawn bow around
me- a dedicated but ragged arrow.
That, and how the sky's periwinkle
looks more impressionist knock-off
than God-stroke.

Catch me firing shot glasses
against it like broken knuckle
against jaw, like my uncle
into last July's bonfire- his ashes
a ghost story about early graves.

My heart grew a mouth at
his wake, splinted a windpipe

into my airway, and has been practicing
its falsetto into perfection. It is
searching for the golden frequency
which speaks directly to my captor's
childhood- when it was just
rambunctious and ambitious
& malleable- before it was
blown jilted into a prison

of all things liquid. Good news
is I think my heart's getting
close to pitch perfect. A couple
days ago I swear the glass cracked
a smile & I stole my first real
taste of the cotton candy above
since the last time I knew my name
meant something important.