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Crown Shyness

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Crown Shyness

In the love poem I cannot write, I talk about orchids, and air roots, and the way young bark bends beneath wire. I tell you I'm the Phalaenopsis, and how it feels like putting me in a casket in the ground when you plant me like any other flower—my roots need air, not the coffin-crush of earth. I say I'll promise to give your leaves enough sun in return.

In the break-up poem I cannot write, I compose unrhymed lines about how I make bonsais from weeds instead of buying them, because I'm cheap, but I end up letting my weeds grow because I can't stand to cripple them how I want to. People say bonsais are beautiful only after they've wrapped them in wire for years.

In the apology poem I cannot write, you stand at the heart of a forest and look up. It's like looking at a dried-up lake: the surface above riddled with cracks, making each tree's leafy head into an island. They're crackling with perfect green life, but the arms of one tree refuse to touch the hands of another.