

KARL MEADE

de mens

what it means

All night we cling to the hills: scree face, foot hold, my words
scattered against the stars, back-dropped,
you and me, stones and we—

eroding? Sometimes I remember. What it means
cleaving the mind, leaving the earth, the rubble we came from, the stones I've lost—

the words you never said to me: pill box, taxi chit,

meal cart. Is this our new love: pharma
love? I remember. How it ends, our reduction to one, note, contracting,
my brain cleaving itself of you, and me. I remember our limbs

fused that last night, your last crystalline night:
sixteen pills and ten doctor hooks

on shuffle play. I remember what it means

how you loved the hook of my heart flutter, how we played it,
in and out, you and me, ragged-veined victims of your thousand day
lymph war. I remember, in your honour

my platelets stuck their plaque on the wall, the long fuse
of my brain's scattering protein, tangles and angles, your womb, my stones

to mark the hole in the earth

where I'll lay my flesh
on your bones,
my words

on your lips,
fuse our limbs

to the hills.

what de mens

Some days I stare at the words, all day. I stare
all day at the words: *de mens*. They tell me what it means, leaving
the mind? Now I have nothing

to lose, nothing to hold but our fractured stones
turned pure glacial music. I stare at the stones, I remember

how it ends: the glacier breathes, the canyon gathers: note by fissure

we die alone. It was you
who left first, your wide eyes upon me, all the way down,
my ear to the ground, I hear you

between water and stone, I hear your buried song
of creek and crack. I remember. You are my gift

and burden. You are my voice so clear

the words that left us, left us together. We are scattered moraine, terminal
and lateral. We are ground so pure our feet keep walking, our children
keep talking. We give them this gift

of river mouth from canyon, of rain from sea, I tell them
we are not just death's creeping advance we are the open terrace of fracture

we turn ice into music, stone into water.

We give them the earth's
metamorphosis:
what it means

to turn this
creak and crack

of you into me.

what de mentia

Some nights I hold the moon, all night. The window,
the moon, all night I hold the words your mouth
left me, the sun

rises, the moon leaves. Where
have you gone? I remember

you said the sun holds the moon

half in the dark. This is love, you said, split
luminosity. There are stars so pure
their own light won't leave. The dark

is just light, you said, beheld. The holes
are just space

the words leave

for you and me
sun and moon

I remember now

how it ends
what it
means.