

What Am I To You?

What am I to you?

Am I a ghost?

Twin voids where the air from my lungs should be

The shadow of the girl who could have been

Is that why you touch me so nervously?

For fear of the faint

For fear of what you don't quite understand

Am I a doll?

Eyes glassy, unblinking

Limbs carved from porcelain

Is that why you touch me so delicately?

For fear of breaking what broke inside long ago

For fear of cracking my fragile frame

Am I a corpse?

Another mistake to be buried

A reminder that death is always close behind us

Is that why you touch me so hesitantly?

For fear of my skin rotting away at your fingertips

For fear of contamination

Or am I human?

Flesh and blood in your arms

All life and emotion and biological clockwork

Is that why you touch me so lovingly?

To feel my heart beating alongside yours

As if we were two overflowing bodies in an empty room

Spilling our hearts into each other

Is that why you touch me so sweetly?

To feel that current that constantly surges between us

Sometimes static electricity, sometimes a lightning bolt

Apart we may be broken, but together we form a closed circuit

It's a wonderful comfort, knowing there will always be a pair of open arms to come home to

I will always know what you are to me

But I may never know what I am to you

I may never know if the lightness of your touch is because you are repulsed

Or afraid

Or because you love me in a complex and beautiful way I will never fully understand

So I keep guessing

—*Ruksana Kabealo*