

## [Mehrnoosh Torbatnejad: Two Poems](#) [1]

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### Wisteria

He would forgive me, I am sure, when my  
mother returns to the table; rustic bread  
in toaster, a steamless cup of coffee beside  
a plate of curdled yolk, the kitchen curtains  
swelling with a wind that only the supernatural  
know; before breakfast, she cooled my broiling  
skin with a cold palm caressing my back—please  
be a mountain, be a mountain firm beneath  
the blizzard of grief, a camouflaged soldier rising  
from the trenches of mourning, a lioness, my lioness,  
she cries, stay steady in sunlight fading, or just be a cub,  
be a cub I carry in your vacant savanna, be Ali  
shuffling, uncornered in the ring, be a tree,  
be wisteria, be dogwood, be red maple and  
embarrass the most brilliant star, please  
be a climber and climb until every pixel  
of the sky's bloom falls directly into your view;  
I will forever rinse this cloth, she says,  
and temper the fever that plagues you, but be—  
is everything I cannot do, as dawn dangles  
outside the circle that chokes her pleas, and  
in her silence is the sound of a thousand hearts  
splitting; she did not love me enough  
to forgive me, not like the god who understood



## October

After I tattooed verses into my bloodstream,  
followed capsules into their buildings,  
buoyed in the company of worried colleagues,  
I transferred my money before I finished writing  
thank-you letters, thank you, thank you, you did your best  
(I'll miss the quiet flakes, caffeine, making you laugh)  
Then I filed papers for impatient clients; do this the right way  
Leave no body in query; this is the right way  
Clear confusion and debts, supply answers before anyone ponders  
I fed the birds and scrubbed between floorboards  
I folded scarves and sweaters for the poor; each day I pushed the checklist  
and a dot of glee grew in my throat, like a pill, the closer I reached  
October. I sat on a bench across from my home, with coffee

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Dust suspended in a beam returned when I stopped asking for it

My phone in the other hand, buzzed; the dot, a point, now an exclamation—so I waited



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### Art Information

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  - “Temple of Baal, Starry Sky”
  - “Colonnade in Temple Precinct, Night”



Mehrnoosh Torbatnejad was born and raised in New York. Her poetry has appeared in the *Missing Slate*, *Passages North*, *HEArt Journal Online*, *Chiron Review*, and is forthcoming in *Natural Bridge*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, and *Pinch Journal*. She is a 2016 Best of the Net nominee. She currently lives in New York City and practices matrimonial law.

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