

## The Patron Saint of Letting Go

got a big brother on C Block, Pinellas County Jail  
fifty grown men strung out to dry in the oldest part of the prison  
victims of a lifetime of stupid decisions, toxic relationships and drug addiction  
says it gets a little crowded with all those men when all their demons come to visit  
and the monsters under the bed are asking to bum a cigarette  
and he's asking himself what he could have done different

if I could redistribute the weight of your pain across my shoulders  
I would carry your burden happily  
just to keep you company, I would Airbnb the bunk bed above yours  
and then it'll be me in there gambling with James Patterson novels  
and commissary calling cards  
with all those anger management angels fallen from grace  
it'll be me in the infirmary, pride as wounded as my face

but the Patron Saint of Letting Go tells me that suffering doesn't work like that  
it can't be taken off you and lifted by another's back  
you can sit up all night by their hospital bed, but you can't borrow their cancer  
I hang a vision of the saint on the walls of my heart  
and light a candle underneath like the women do in church  
when they're beseeching God to protect those they love the most  
I'm an old Catholic mother with a rosary tangled around my worried hands  
I'm a thousand wind whipped prayer flags strung between the temple gates  
I've been your little sister for all of my life  
I close my eyes and in the stillness try to find you there

sometimes all you have to arm yourself against the darkness is a box of matches  
so I try to send words that will strike a light against your fear of being crushed under  
hourglass sand, other people's fists, time that can't seem to move fast enough  
If all else fails I'll sit inside your tragedy cracking jokes just to try to make you laugh