

Poems

Cathy Stonehouse

black (or white)

“nothing is this colour, really nothing”
(journal of frida kahlo)

it is no use
looking at each wide hole
where the line stops

each flat
emptiness of self
what depth it has

no need to trust in this
how loved one speaks

fine needle
turning round and round
towards centre

scratch pause
scratch pause

it will not help

to just record
curved emptiness

dark gloss or sheen

movements of light
through what we were

never before
afraid of

the word “open”

I signal back to you

mother, tonight you called
in this dark room
scent of discarded shoes
your voice coiled-up on tape
you want to come visit

I touch the open field of my belly
its curve inwards
your lips pressed to my mouth
our breath identical

I turn the hall light on
flying from you
I found a separation
between earth and sky
sun pushed through clouds ahead

I climbed out
from the valley of your mouth
your open legs
your furled womb no parachute
string caught around my neck
I cried, my screams
not slapped from me

I play your message back
caught up against the final beep
I signal back to you
light on the answering machine
hovers, unblinking red
plane that will never land