

## *The Things You Couldn't Take*

*by Jé Maverick*

Moving day, and I should have faced this dawn,  
should have swaddled myself in armour and rose,  
a warrior, from this bed where I, damaged,  
lie as a lump beneath white linen,  
a snowdrift, but colder.

As the home becomes house, I listen:  
it grows bigger - you empty from it -  
and him, my son with the dark eyes,  
bristles in the hallway, all excitement.  
You tell him to put shoes on.  
He doesn't understand that you  
haven't boxes big enough  
to pack the absence of his laughter,  
or any room to take  
the empty space of where you were.  
It's a broken family's husk, this house:  
a void for my lone echoes.

What will I do when you go?  
I'll wage a war with memory;  
overwhelm myself;  
try to empty boiling oceans with a thimble.  
I'll clench my heart, I'll bare my teeth at God;  
I'll drink: twice my weight in bad tequila.  
I'll walk, hunched, wild eyes open to the stinging wind  
so I can hide the truth in crying;  
I'll go unshaved for seasons,  
howl at mountains I can't move, and,  
jaw set, set firm as a statued-Greek,  
I'll cold-store all expression.  
It's in this way,  
this way, that I'll go about the world, insane with grief,  
swinging clubs at the head of each new morning  
until I tire of fighting, to return  
to this same bed,  
here, where we read aloud and laughed,  
broke the bread of life,  
made love like savages,  
and pledged eternities.  
But for now, for now I'll hold my place,  
right here, right here where I, damaged,

# Jé Maverick

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a lump beneath white linen,  
a snowdrift, but colder.

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