

Gayle Ledbetter Newby -- Two Poems

Broken

To be unglued
detached from the rounding earth,
the sun not dancing through your window
but glaring, wakening within you that
which begs to sleep.

To hear a fugue, sit morosely by
the slant of early evening, failing to still
the dying of your heart.

If the pain be grief or redemption,
you decide that day to cut your arms,
or paint your brow with ashes;
or to simply lie down in the grave of your history.

I call this brokenness
and beg it to forgive.

Formulary

I look at the photo.
Not sepia, more seventies, faded,
hard to read.

Still, one can see the strength,
sturdy peasant stock mingled obtusely
with lowland planter blood.

It is the eyes that bedevil me.
Just empty: shut down like a small town
Southern square.

I look away

Stories of the panther, fables, tangle of lineage,
the hundred year reign of briar grass on heartbreak
give up farms
piece together.

I think I might create a labyrinth, a formulary, soliloquy.

I might compound a study---

of why our story ends this way.

Gayle Ledbetter Newby has been published in *After the Pause*, *Boomer Lit*, *decomp*, *the Hiram poetry Review*, *Gravel magazine*, *Muddy River Review*, *The Santa Fe literary Review*, and others. her chap book *Once Appointed* was published by Plan B Press, Fall, 2017. Gayle makes her home in Mississippi