

## 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