Thunderous Ode

Leslie G. Roman

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Inside a sinkhole,

Dark, grasping,

Restless thunder,

Thunderous clouds

Tumble, no scatter, scatter, ska, sca, sku, stutter,

My words fall apart, sentences,

Scribbled on a tattered page,

Tumble from the sky,

Fall to earth, scatter, ska, ssssca, sku, stutter, stuck in

My throat, what am I trying to say after all?

How much more--much more I work to be?

There will be no chicken soup for me

This time, there will be no harmony,

No relief

Repetition of darkness,

Dark moon,

No hands,

No sky

No horizon,

Just horizontal space,

Not an enviable slumber party

Flat vision, the plains cannot match this flat sadness

A knee fidgets, Oh, dear psychiatrist, you don’t say!: “Her knee fidgets anxiously”,

Like a moving pendulum, a steel-like ruler in the sky

Swings to measure the extraordinary,

The Thunder, the lightening, the bolts that short circuit

And through excess swallow the body into a deep cavernous

Sleep without slumber,

a waking pulse that disorganizes memory,

Feeling and affect, come apart

Did I mention the thunder?

Ska, sccss, scissor, Wish I could scissor out this bleakness

Dear Vincent, Van Gogh, of course,

Please don’t insult my intelligence

And tell me that your depression brought you

*The Starry Night* or the *Sun Flowers*

It must have been *The Potato Eaters*

That seared my head in half

Weight 88 lbs. Eat now, die later,

Reach into the survivor backpack,

Pull out the old protein ice cream milkshakes

Till death do us not part

But the scale sings a slightly more weighty tune.

Inside a sinkhole

A small crackle of light,

Criss-crosses the consciousness

Hope rises in the moon

That one hand touches another

To reach the moon

Dear Mr. Van Gogh and Ms. Sylvia Plath,

Where there is no *Bell Jar*,

There is at least art

A glimmer of moonlight

Against the dark,

We author our own books,

Tumble as they do from the sky to the beach below,

To frolic with the geckos

Alongside lizards and

Next to colors which we welcome like modest

Light

Tea candles--a different starry night

Than you imagined, Vincent.

Than imagined you, Vincent.

Author’s Artistic Statement: Before her major depression she did not think her art would save her life. Now, she gets asked in disbelief when people see the bright colors in her paintings, "Funny, your paintings don't look like you were depressed" to which she responds: "Why should I have to paint colors that continue to depress me? These paintings are part of series of five entitled “Depression ≠ Work: Faultlines in Productivist Citizenship”. Painting is not only a way of being connected to the world, it also a way of being outside the sphere of judgment. Geckos are a symbol of transformation and disability culture is transformative.