**paper**

it wrapped my bones up in a blanket of

something warm that felt like me

the less I became the closer I felt to enough

by the time they started suffocating it was too

late too late too late I had had enough

and it had not

-they assessed my pain as moderate

I screamed inside.

I knew, then, that I would never be enough

not for it, not for them, not for myself

who was too strangled to shout

I am five foot fucking nine

what the fuck is wrong with you people

(needless to say, it was thriving)

\*

my paper-self ensued regardless, a pile

of moderately unwell numbers, letters,

which decided for me how sick I was

and what help I would get

they made me both small and big

too much of either, they said that I

could not eat – swallowed up

humiliation

rice cakes on a page

dear GP,

the patient is in great distress

she feels she does not deserve to eat bread

see her on this page, this formal expression

of the inexpressible, reduced to bread

to well kempt and quantified

from this professional distance

consider her assessed

all that pain, for bread?

I knew you were nothing

all that pain, for moderate?

we’ll never let you stop

(needless to say, it was still thriving)

\*

and they tell you lots of things about recovery

and they don’t tell you lots of things about

recovery

like

how -

bread becomes bread

as then becomes now, yes

I squeezed my identity back from my hunger

and as bread became bread

still I didn’t know how

to take back my power from

all of that paper



*Photography by Katharine Lazenby*