

# The Thing Can't See Itself

From Proud Flesh  
Maya Francine Thomas

I'm grateful for the people who opened the door  
and furious there was a door.

I'm soaring, flying to hit the ground running  
far far away from where I was  
just to see someone that looked like me.

I didn't know where I was,  
but I was still free,  
so I laughed and laughed  
and joked around  
and played with myself.

I didn't really know the shelf was so high.  
I was already standing on it.  
How can I be that well?

Well, well, well  
well  
well.

It skins me to bone  
to feel how quickly I could be released.  
I could be let go  
and it was more than a win.  
It was more than a show.

It was everything I am  
and they said,  
No thank you.

Nobody understood why it was so helpful  
to be up there,  
to be something that someone could see  
that they hadn't seen before,  
but that they knew deep inside themselves  
was more like them  
than they could ever admit.

Oh my my my my my my—

My Maya, my love.

When you get up,  
it's not just for you, girl.

Get it going.  
Don't stop again.

Just quit making reasons  
to go back  
where you know we don't belong.

This is the story.  
This is the song.

Let your voice fall.  
Let it rest there  
and let it know itself.

Your scars have been paid for.  
You never needed to open your own flesh.

Maya girl.

You can own it  
because you better  
and you know better  
and you've done better

and better  
better  
better  
better  
better  
better—

you better bet on yourself.

The odds don't back down.

Don't shrink.

Get just small enough  
to get inside your own vehicle.

Your own—

chug  
chug  
chug  
chug  
chug  
chug  
chug—

I think I can.  
I think I can.  
I think I can.  
I think I can.

I can't think.  
I can't think.  
I can't think.  
I can't think outside  
and stay insulated inside a thing.  
The thing can't see itself.