

which reminds me of that time I swapped my mattress with hers

while she was out  
sprinkling ant powder  
in our drive.

It was so easy.  
I shimmied off one mattress.  
I shimmied on the next.

When asked, I said it happened  
for the hell of it.

And that night her nightmare was mine,  
the same dream  
where a daddy long legs comes  
to steal her arms.

I came round to her, beside me.  
She was stroking my downy hair.

I woke in the best sweat of her life.

## Child of Spleen

There are some things the matter with her:

Mouths. She has too many.  
Her birthmarks reek  
of purple daughterhood.  
She's got cling-film-skin,  
a rumbling heart, unfed.

The eldest child of one. `

*Open wide, says mum,  
Here comes the aeroplane!*  
Mum hops in a cockpit,  
prepares to be consumed

but the many mouths of the child shut.  
There's no room in her.

There's no room out of her either.

## Leopards and Dandelions

So when Nanna passes me  
a book of her poems  
it's the title that I take in first:  
*Leopards and Dandelions.*  
A delicate association  
of wild cats and blooms.

It's a curious thing  
to be given.  
It makes me wonder  
if she slipped medicinal love of words  
into the sugar lumps  
I'd shovel up my cheeks  
when I could still hide  
with a child's face.

Maybe she snuck  
a regard for the pun  
in the folded fivers  
she thought I could afford  
a trip to *The Pictures* with,  
the ones she'd sprout  
with trickery from her purse.

Maybe it was those arms.  
At the point of embrace.  
When I'd press against her hard  
with my putty chest  
waiting to feel the fierce within her roar  
and hail me in a thousand sweet florets.

Then I'd know  
I'd inherited all her kingdoms.

She always did call me her treasure.