Thesis/Antithesis

after Immanuel Kant

**Thesis: grief is a shared pull**

We don’t talk much, except
of how the weight flooded us
at our desks at night,
in the produce aisle, the shower. How
sometimes breath gets to feel
so heavy in our chests.
How we can’t quite name
what is pulling us so gracefully
into the earth.

**Antithesis: grief is our own transcription**

This is a loner’s cryptography,
a fevered alphabet
so someone else can feel
the heat on my skin while I describe
the burning.

I want to craft a language
of my mother’s ghost,
catalogue her haunting, the matter
of the fact of her,
how her letters breathed
echinacea and lavender oil
and her hand was so lovely
I could barely read it.
Thesis: our dreams are where we’re haunted

Sick of dreaming, we don’t sleep. One sister lies awake reading books in foreign languages, the other picks her fingers raw. I stay up late watching spiders appear between the cracks in the siding of my house, admire how they trust the darkness just enough to test it, how they move with such grace they’re closer before I notice.

Antithesis: dreaming brings the dead to us

When I sleep I see her body in shallow water, hear a voice speaking through a mouth full of salt. This is my intimacy with spirits, however I can see the dead alive and whole.

I wake, my head brimming fog, and shut my eyes to wait for haunting, dream of sage and brittle stars or only sleep.