70%, she says

seventy percent of who you were

and I've come to accept it.

still, every day

I have to re-learn to

accept again

and again anyway

You ask me about The Pain,

what it feels like,

and I explain

the burning

sparking

stabbing

aching

in all their

pluralities

but i don't tell you

that the pain is

the least of it

that the grief

weighs me down

and the fear

freezes me

we talk about exercises

and I tell you it's hard

monotonous

when the goal is

just to be

a fraction of what you were

but i don't tell you

about the daily calculations

the monitoring

testing

maintenance

this text book

i'm reading

and the study

of my own

body

i write

every hour,

of every day

i don't describe

chasing appointments

juggling specialists

the letters on letters

the burden of proof

laid in my arms

to bare

how i'm performing

the part

in just the 'right' way

defined elsewhere,

a monologue

where i'm

writer

director

actor

puppet

just for anyone

to take me

seriously

part of me

doesn't want you to see

the crushing defeat of it all

i'm at the river

so regularly

feeding it

the little pebbles

of me

a task i wanted to do

a sweet accomplishment

i thought i'd achieve

letting them wash away

time

and

again

in the hopes of

maybe

"one day"

knowing it

also rides the river

flowing

ever ahead

of me.

i may as well be the river

i have thought

to wash all of me away

what if

seventy percent

is more than

i should hope for

what if

in no longer chasing

better,

you

who has never been

in the river

and never had

to consider

less than

a hundred,

are also

something

i must

watch

wash

away