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## Acquiesce

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**LAURA NAZIMEK}{ACQUIESCE**

*Those old, old fingers  
posed anciently over the piano  
as if you had been a musical pharaoh  
and we buried your whole scene beneath the earth.*

*But life still ticks and tocks,  
seeping through your leathery collapsed veins  
and I find myself strangely fixated  
with your persistence to press upon  
those stuck and yellowed keys.*

*Suddenly your hands remind me  
of the scaly toes of a stubborn bird--  
madly clawing at a branch which is  
far too smooth and broad to ever grasp.  
Scratching and wailing downward into classic redundancy.*

*Your fingernails are stale  
and poke insistently out from your bones  
tapping slowly against the keys  
as if the song you compose  
is really an exercise in breathing.*

*I stare,  
but am horrified by the plucking.*

**KEITH CUNNINGHAM){CLASSIC**

*(Nominated, staff art award, for above and shield on back cover)*

