



**broken |
whole**

Nicholas Luchenbill, photographer

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SHARE THEIR STORIES OF ART AND HEALING.
RAW. UNAPOLOGETIC. BEAUTIFUL.

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"A Forest that is Desert"

by Kendra Preston Leonard

1. In the Stony Mountains

I turn her chair and she turns to me
and she is looking so very far away;
her eyes sweep the room and come about
to land on me and she says

Oh—

oh,
I am having
the most terrible
hallucination

and I think she has lost me forever,
amid names and faces and trees

so much is lost
in a forest
that is desert

my hand circles on her
back, all spine, stony mountains
and I tell her
I tell her
that I'm real and she says

how

how can you be here?

I flew, I tell her:

I flew here to see you.

But how can that be?

It just is; I am here.

2. Shadow Reel to Last Breath

There is no revelation
in her vexed words, lost sleep,
the catch in her throat.

Shadows reel about the room
where a lamp is always on,
a little sun.

We turn her body,
turn her sheets,
take turns around her bed.
We walk,
with anarchy and darkness
on the clock,
an arc.

Rock, and step, and circle.

Listen, listen,
her speech is rough
and loose.

We keep our tears silent
and our gazes blank.

The hour comes round at last.

3. Hospice

Hear the willow sweep away
the leaves that fall on the brick,
and fix the light by the wardrobe
where the old shade riddles it round.

One breath in and one breath out
while the second hand sweeps in silence;
her hands trace circles in the air
and on the counterpane.

Hold my hand, you won't get lost.
The moon circles the earth, and the tide
comes in and out, sweeping clear the beach;
the waves arc and recede.

Kendra Preston Leonard is a poet and librettist based in Texas, where she writes about things local, historic, and mythopoeic. She is currently at work on a poetry collection.