

# Thursday, M. Shepard

The stage is set to rip the wings from a butterfly,  
the stage is set,  
don't forget to breathe,  
between lines if the whole world dies,  
then it's safe to take the stage,  
these graves will stretch  
like landing on strips - hospitals: all the dead museums, we won't have to be afraid anymore.  
The crowd is growing silent with the gathering storm.  
When the curtain falls and you're caught on the other side (just trying to keep up the act),  
we'll lie in the back of black cars,  
with the windows rolled up,  
joining the precession of emptiness,  
if we say these words,  
it will be too late to take them back.  
So we hold our breathe and fold our hands,  
like paper planes (and we're going to crash)  
We don't have to be alone ever again.  
There's a riot in the theatre.  
Someone's standing the aisle, yelling that the murderers are everywhere and they're lining up,  
carving M in your side.  
Pull the curtains back.  
Kill all the house lights.  
Pin the dress lotus flowers. The silk is spinning around and around,  
with the ceiling fan.  
I'm disappearing into the spotlight.  
I'm on display,  
with the butterfly and the scare crow,  
with smiles like picket fences, you tie us all up and leave us outside.  
"That voice is silent now and the boat has sunk..."  
We're on our own but we're not going to run.