Your Feet / Love Poem

Kate Middleton

Your undressed feet tell the story of my heart:
the lines troughs I could dip my hands into
to quench myself, the roughness of the nails,
dirty, and slightly squared, my roughness.

She was his model and his lover
(though I am unsure which role came first)
and from him she learned the trick of it—
later photographing the feet most revealingly.

My life is told in their naked surface.
So rarely bare they become for an instant the one
true thing: like an individually carved button,
the most sour lemon, the unbalancing abstention
of your hand. This photograph
was the most personal—no face, the identity
told in the skin knotted by work, and the simplicity
of sandals. There is nothing dainty in them.

Just like there is nothing dainty in your feet.
They are browner than mine could ever be
from time spent north. A beautiful code—the language
of everything I’ll never know of you.

You have touched my own feet before, with hands
infinitely warmer, in the morning as we took flight
out of winter. Your hands rested on them
and later on my belly, a lover’s fingers

laced into fear. My muteness a protestation
not of the way you thought my stomach smooth
but of the difference between us. How can I say it?
Your feet, bare with nothing like the relish

of my own. Your feet. Which I have never held.