

# Only Child

Shearwater

Your mother's milk  
Your father's anger  
The razor wire surrounding him  
And far below  
Their droning engines  
You lay in bed  
Blowing out stars

The masters of  
Your lonely kingdom  
Pulled you along  
With red-rimmed eyes  
Through endless hours  
Of drill and harness  
Until you fell, surrendering

But still they never  
    laid the gun down,  
    only child  
They sit like  
    lions in a sunbeam,  
    only child  
And never came down

Remember all  
The roads descending  
To who you were,  
    for blurred-out miles?  
You smolder now—  
Coals and embers  
Under the frost of indolence  
I see you  
    never lay the gun down,  
    only child  
You live your life  
    behind a window,  
    only child  
And, dreaming,  
    barrel down a bloodline,  
    only child

Rise in the air over the mountains  
Run like the days that cut them down  
I see you now  
As you relive them  
Break like a wave, disassembling,  
But when you're lying  
    down among them,  
    only child  
There is no sound  
    to fill the silence,  
    only child. Forgive them  
When you lay the gun down,  
    only child, it's not surrendering—  
It feels like running back through time  
Only you know how  
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