





*You say I'm foolish  
For pushing this aside  
But burn down our home  
I won't leave alive  
—The xx*

camping in broken teeth  
fitted sheets are 300-scream count  
ripped into bags, plastic scratched

glowing plaque lanterns humming  
dingy hours, dusk is inaudible  
tell me again:

how old are these coniferous stumps?

asylum chopped down  
rings of repugnance line  
floor board ceilings

welcome curse words

come in rattling wind

curtains are blue security guards

indiscreet privacy lurks behind  
bulky rope bracelets call out  
stone air

dominance anchors this shelter  
my home?  
home is survival



## Artist Statement

My piece of erasure poetry titled “Crystallized Tent” is part of an ongoing poetry project in response to intimate partner rape and violence. When I practice erasure poetry—the strategic emphasis and removal of words from an existing text—the creative act centres the control that was taken from me. Through this process, I rediscover aspects of my identity that have been damaged. My process includes practicing mixed media art and poetry; although I had previously participated in these two crafts, the abuse I experienced made expressing myself through these creative forms difficult.

In this erasure lyric poetry series, I include lyrics from musicians that invite me to revisit difficult, painful, and traumatic memories. This specific poem and visual poetry component is an exploration of the song “Crystallised” by The xx. I carefully listen to the song(s) and note how my body, skin, and mind react and which images of trauma resurface. To create a safe space for myself while I explore the dangers of trauma, I ensure that I have a crisis-line number readily available, as well as a supportive person nearby.

The mediums used for this piece (paper, ink, and acrylic paint) are a nod to materials that I was fond of prior to my abusive relationship. I also used fire as a medium, burning portions of the paper to commemorate feelings of loss and destruction.

The imagery explores trauma as attached, and part of, the body. Trauma, as aspects of skin and hair, shedding, and yet, continually manifesting in new forms. It represents dissociation of identity.

With this project, I create a space for myself where I begin to repair aspects of my identity that have been affected by sexualized violence and abuse. Poetry, especially erasure poetry, is an act that allows me to extract, dissect, and attempt to make sense of repressed trauma. The image included with my erasure poem is an illustration of how my body feels and reacts while I listen to triggering songs.

In a move to reclaim beloved songs, I am exploring the complexities of trauma: how it blocks out certain events and how it makes other experiences lucid. I reflect on how music is a crucial component of memory making and breaking. A single lyric has the power to punch you in the gut or render you completely numb.

This radical form of healing allows me to recollect, reclaim, and explore memories of pain, abuse, and trauma, and to generate a documentation of tangible healing.

HEATHER PROST is a queer settler that lives, works, and studies on the unceded ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. She is a recent Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Simon Fraser University graduate and is currently enrolled in an Expressive Art Therapy program. Her paid work, volunteer commitments, and research predominantly centre around survivors of sexualized violence and exploring various healing methodologies. She is a mother to three cats.