**Cell** *by Helen Cook*

She scrapes in her testament:

*No, Mother, do not weep.*

The wall is solid.

She finds a way to

make a mark

proof that she exists.

Breathing in breathing out

her heart a funeral bell

tolling her hours

she chants into the stone

*Most chaste Queen of Heaven.*

Her voice, a cell within a cell

a single living thing

of eighteen summers

now wintering

here air is stale

here light is barred

here torment exceeds the cold.

She scratches her will into slabs

that listen but are mute:

*Support me always.*

*Support me always.*

She seals with her name –

the one essence not defiled.

*Inspired by Gorecki’s Symphony no 3 Sorrowful Songs, 2nd movement*