

The cento is a form that originated in the fourth century. To write a cento, a poet takes the poems of other authors and breaks them apart into lines and phrases, then reassembles the lines and phrases in a way that 1) makes sense and 2) says something new. In this way, the poet creates a new system of imagery, new ideas, and creates a conversation among poets from different time periods and different continents and different countries.

For this poem, hunt through our poetry collections and collect lines to use in new poem. From your lines, select an theme (Muench's theme appears to be continuing to live after suffering, aging, and loss) and a symbol (the wolf is Muench's symbol, here representing the spirit that keeps fighting). Then start constructing your cento.

Wolf Cento

Simone Muench

parallel structure - repeated verb and adjective

well developed simile, gets at idea that passing time (sun going down) does violence to us, injures us.

Very quick. Very intense, like a wolf at a live heart, the sun breaks down.

metaphor for time passing

What is important is to avoid the time allotted for disavowels as the livid wound leaves a trace leaves an abscess takes its contraction for those clouds that dip thunder & vanish like rose leaves in closed jars.

do not spend time dwelling on injuries, they will vanish

Age approaches, slowly. But it cannot crystal bone into thin air.

→ noun turned into verb - fighting against age

The small hours open their wounds for me.

→ fighting back against time

This is a woman's confession:

I keep this wolf because the wilderness gave it to me.

the loner, fighting spirit is a gift from nature

↓
something seen as a sin, she keeps her fighting spirit despite ~~and~~ the laws of age that say she should lose it.

repetition