

Ten Short Poems of Spring and a Song of Longing

I

white blossoms cover the one tree
of the orchard
then fall.
shake branches suspended in whiteness –

death by death
a thousand drop.

wedding, marriage –
the bride takes off her dress.
piece by piece
a thousandfold
descending her limbs.

each by each

sail

to earth. each one is me, is you –

boat of tiny revolutions
maiden
master of ceremonies –
how important you are!

||

the broken blossoms
sprinkle
they pink and swirl
ten thousand
to the tree's waist –
a revolution
with a simple covering
laid down.
how like the girl
just missed
and remembered.

III

reluctantly the spring rain
beads your thighs
with the laces of short love.

a vulnerable, wet smile
spreads
making your legs ache.

exposed to rain and bare air
i turn over
pulling the earth
around my shoulders

and return my body to the soil
without a box

IV

i scarcely know you, yet

thin eggshells roll together in my fist
while out of the window
i look at daffodils, crocus,
and snow-on-the-mountain.

i open my hand in the pit of my stomach.
where have we been meeting
that you haven't been telling me about?

v

i was straight-backed and proudly
light-fingered

i was sudden

i was unspoken, morning-shaft,
and high-kited

i was front-blind, fresh –

and i was sundown

with anticipation

to see you.

VI

you crawl out the ends of branches
in sticky yellow buds –

blue-eyed-Mary and i
bent crying
poking our heads out of the earth –
young, sun-diving
seedlings sent weakly
throughout the spring
into a high
laugh-a-daisy sky.

a slight wind stirs an empty seedpod
on the ground below bare branches.

VII

how do you become unpredictable?

blackbird flies the uncounted pages
of the sky

in a curved sky, it
cries out loud

cutting the throat of an immense day.

by doing exactly what you said.

VIII

a sliver of empty sky
(open)
thin as paper

interrupts white clouds
betrays, like a girl,
her dress undone,
the continuity beneath.

like a woman with a long, blue-flowered
skirt

(the wind pulls the sky apart)

her dress
rises and falls.

her nature
is to breathe.

IX

overnight, the lungs of spring
open all along the curve
of branch
above the sculptor's door.

a deep breath blossoms,
leaps from slender twigs,
shoots into thin sapling
limbs, into one

thousand breaths
all filling my chest at once.

X

white blossoms cover the one tree of the orchard,
then fall.

shake branches

overladen with whiteness –
dialectic of moths.

let my words be the words of stones
rushing in the river's mouth.

labored breath – let my muscles
collect death the way the water
falls
carriage of opened stones.

God dies in little fish
frailing upstream

men crouch naked in their wishes
as an eggshell in the mist.

how important you are –
blackbird, blossom,
snow-on-the-mountain.
this river's language undoes the gate of words
as love the single gate of death.

i love you
and your gentle way of forgiving.

A Song of Longing

*In that abyss I saw how love held bound
into one volume all the leaves whose flight
is scattered through the universe around*

Dante, *Paradiso*, Canto 33:85-87

arched like a water scrolling over stones
a volume of branches bound in white
an arrow springing toward your wordless bones

this love leaps
with the flex
of a longbow
strung to knowing

*dancing, rising
Wu Li Master
leaping higher
now than ever
lifting, scenting
Gethsemane*

the bow is a curve bent upon longing
the bough taken from the human shoulder
the curve from neck to elbow

it is the living river
that spills
laughter
from your mouth

*freeing, falling
(stone year calling)
living river
now whenever
budding branches
shed to bear*

the curve turns at the lenient season
Lenten, when the days grow longer
the bow bends, the limbs bear their white blossoms

the belonging cry
springs from
the bent bow

sending each arrow stronger to the one
who holds the goal shot beyond desire
who takes long to come for what's lent

the river drops its
round vowels
over stone shoulders

its consonants click with tongue and teeth it lacks
without rocks that clack and shatter water into sounds
that bound down lap to lap of years like boulders

wearing voices into them
like curves in stones –
the bones
that make a music
of the passing flow

*pouring, paring
stone year wearing
water carving
petals parting
the grain that's in
the year to be*

spinning down the manifold world's man-old sins
bent with joyful intent on prolonging
the headlong descent that is *to be*

the years put on the water's clothing
rocky throats betrothing
its bare breath expressed

when

in its waterway
(it goes)

overthrowing Leviathan

*pooling, clearing
sons and daughters
drops of water
collecting there
at the bottom
unread volume*

arrow, laugh, and river leaping only turn
(with the season) the revolution of your dying
like a volume on a scroll

rolled on that arching
first parchment
membrane of the universe:
membrane of the uterus

*filling, fulling
bucket turning
rushing, spilling
waterwheel.*

spring turns over
the unmoved mover
in one motion, revolution.