

HANDFUL OF DREAMS

I've always longed for
the promiscuity of reckless wind.
The memory that knows me best
often rolls backward to my childhood;
to my father's stallion
galloping me through wetness,
its mane flying in drenched light.
With the trees wildly bending,
across the prairie we would go
until at last only a handful of dreams
stood between us and the sea.
Hoofbeat after hoofbeat
and a pocketful of imagination
wafted us from one horizon to another.
Since those boundless mornings
not much has changed.
I am still content
to drown myself in rain
that glistens wind's reckless flights.

I WILL BE ALL LIGHT

Summer is done with me—
the leaf, the petal, the flower.

But all is not over.

My spirit grows boundless,
soaring without worry, without tiring
through the most wreckful storms.

I see through death and refuse it.

Having known the firmness
of branches and vines;
of so many suns and moons;
of every ennobling cloud flake,
I have learned to endure.

No lament for their season.

Peace shares the space where harsh winds cry.

Summer has fallen silent,
but its virtues gather in waves.

No winter tears. No parting sorrow.

I am meant to grace this world
that blessed me with such abundance.

When this disgruntled season passes

I will wing my way back to you.

You will recognize my fragrance
strewn along your footways.

I will be all light.

I KNOW

Nothing

can

be

more

indiscreet, or arduous,

than love.

Going, coming, or rushing to nowhere,

it

can

smile

while wedding two hearts,

and laugh

while scissoring them apart.

Having

no

truck

with

patience,

it can,

without malice or forethought,

bloom with honey, then stinging like a wasp,

change clothes in a hurry---

and plunge into oblivion.

I know. Take my word for it.

CONTENTMENT

You to me

and

I to you

have returned.

Heart scars, once frightfully deep,

are healing with peace.

Despair wanes with each sunrise.

Thwarted by the raining of our hearts,

those disruptions that once overtook us

can only talk to a past

that has fallen silent.

For me, you are all there is,

has been, and will be.

What I shall now become

will, through your love,

be what I've longed to be---

a fire to forever burn

within the glow of contentment.

A CHILD ARRIVING

Having swallowed our wintry past,
we await the wondrous gift
slowly making its way to us.

I will welcome it in a hurry,
and my heart swells as day by day

I watch you swell.

I sense the motherlove stirring,
flowing warmly inside you.

I wait---impatiently wait---

for it to soar into birth

like a princely eagle.

Its arrival will oust the uncertainty
of that insatiable shadowy demon,
who, with mischievous ceremony,
chewed up my dreams each night.

Now, here in this place
where spring has buried winter,
the despair that threatened our Eden
is a forgotten word.

Having stolen heaven from the gods,

I feel no guilt for it.

If you would have a star for noon,

it shall be yours.

A MATTER OF COLOR

My white hair is causing trouble---
for people who obviously thought
it would stay black forever.

They accepted its hue
throughout my youth and middle years
without the slightest concern.

Recently, somewhat spuriously that say,
“Friend, you’re looking fine,
just fine.”

The postman comes to my box with enquiries:

How’s your health, old boy?

Your will, is it in order?

Who gets the manuscripts
and the old handsome piano?

The high school that requested
your absence on graduation day,
have you bestowed it to the past?

They go on and on, thrusting
me towards the woes of winter.

Of everything I have heard
these are the questions I’ve been
most anxious not to hear.

This morning my mirror entered the picture.

After taking a naked look

at what fails to bother me,

I decided to grow used to what I saw.

The white hair will keep on being there.

And I intend to go on walking beneath it.

GIVE ME MORE TIME

I could go on dying with joy
for another thousand years.

So many things outstrip my ignorance.

Grant me another century to alter
the chemistry of my misguided blood.

Debts I have to acquire, dreams I have to abate
outnumber branches of burgeoning forests.

My heart is still buying hope on credit
for ceremonies I have yet to celebrate.

I want to know a closetful of things:

Why, so cautiously, do we place our hands
upon other hands in need of a touch?

Why, to our absurdities, are we so treasonous?

Why do we sit in stuffy parlors
and corrupt the walls with negligible talk?

And why, with the future lying in our past
like a bad dream,

do we wave it away as though it were a fly?

My heart is still half-naked, still gasping
like a thirsty sparrow.

Have patience, please. Give me more time---

to devour sonnets and Debussy sonatas;

to invoke solitude for fragrant stars;

to dedicate myself to all that still spins

above the depth of my greenness.

RECOGNITION

I never saw my grandfather, not even a picture of him.
And no one bothered to describe his appearance to me.

But I know exactly what he looked like.
Any number of times I have seen his face,
in my father's face
when obligation weighted it like stones;
when he hummed without knowing what he was humming;
when the disorder of things close to him
sent his fierce mustache quivering,
and goodness, or at times anger,
spun through him like a top.

Without doubt those things, and many more,
built my grandfather's self into his son's self—
like boards and planks firmly hammered together,
roughly sandpapered, then infinitely varnished
with hands that had the touch of leather.

I'm fortunate.

Leftovers from one moved into the roots of the other.

The spirit of both, wandering under my skin,
was hewn from wood hacked from their forests,
leaving my feet with the dizzying problem---
of growing immeasurably larger, before filling boots
two oversized fathers willfully left for me.

Now, my doubtful toes look at their owner derisively.