

Hermit Thrush

No palanquins are in sight or the gliding dirigibles with their little motors' purr.
Yes, & the bazaar's marketplace is far as well
though bells of mosques still din above fuss,
dusting the air's hullabaloo.

You do not hear that bidding for Mother Earth or feel its parts divided
like a sun going dim behind dark gasses.

There life folds at the knees as if its wind has been knocked
but why on your small turf do you sing like a last geisha
found in tattered peasant robes?

Knowing the score from time immemorial is your stance,
half-timid, half-proud in a twilight of waxed lavender
pressed to silver's scrim where your woods make a dome.

Now celestial bodies prick through as if colander-showered
& the moon is a tangled pocket watch in the branches of your Maple.

Why are you a nightingale with a sterling tune of vigilance
instead of sleeping in your roost?

Leaves rustle suddenly fervent when before all was settled,
& those tender as you are also too aware
about what has yet to happen
in the other dirigible world.

Lapland

Your reindeer head is the best thing here,
breathing its downy docility with dozing eyelashes.
They have the curling of large fake ones
but must dream of what is fiercely arctic still,
the wind gentled by currents of Spring
in this slumber's melt.

As a pasture I could enter here, oceans of pastures actually,
steppes rising in patchwork green flats between snow.
I know the lowing of the great herds there,
the bulls too even having heifer hearts,
& the shepherd above a bronze lunar circle.

Its crannies compel the shores of these beasts
for no slaughter come daylight.

I swear that, resting now,
my own face between your horns.

Laundry Nights

Whites first as mirrors become lamps.

To them the sunset is returned & moons too bounce off cloth,
the flapping stretches, each garment a dance of windows,
the lines, the pins...

Wind stages, sound choreographs to be as our touch
passing from wet dew & sensuously airborne.

A few shreds detach, lamb-lost but with their own
foghorn funnels, their own lighthouse need
spirit-worn again, spirits wearing us,
cleansed by experience,
by the night's tongues of tungsten
silk-strung to sing
of the radiant deep.

Three Tomatoes

and my windowsill of western light is its very own New Mexico.
So pure, so absolute, three tomatoes glow as our garden does
ripening now with hollyhocks which, I concede, I know not
the Latin words for. I know only these plumped balls,
each smooth as night, the curve of it, fertile, seed-gleaming,
a core of juice, & if I were to die in this minute, my small world
smashed by the violence of these times, perhaps it would be
these three distinct globes, hot in color, that shall send me
& send me suddenly still as the sill & that absolute light.

I Gave A Bird

my very best string - jute for a nest, a message in her beak.
The rest was snipped & glued, strand after strand, for a folk tree on canvas
solace gave through salvation's window, a view beyond grime
just when I reached the end of reason.

How did that cardinal know a distant summer sky would come
flashing her redness against lime & lemon leaves stirring coolness
despite days of oppression?

So three seasons turned - Fall, Winter, Spring -
with pain's vengeful dreams backfiring blanks,
but now union reminds peace is an arrival,
a strong place to pause.

Outside, the cardinal feeds her trinity-young
perched ruby above emerald, the lawn as magic carpet,
& even store-bought roses in this plastic era
emit a scent or balm when floating, bowl-placed,
amid the baby's breath my lover brought to show,
though nested, how we all along flow
with sinew of jute, hollow-boned,
an amazing feat - nature swears - to go on flying,
yes, in spite of everything.