

Ode to Mulberries

Exalted ornaments adorn the troughs of orchards,
Flesh tinged with the creeping green of late summer,
Ebon marshes pour from asphalt to fenced yards.

Pearls conjured from the crushing sand of suburban wilderness,
Fringe the cracked concrete raised by straying roots,
Gleaming indigo constellations speckle thorny flesh,
The garlands preserved for beauty will soon ferment into rot.

My grandma and I preen the darting leaves
Like choughs home from a great migration
Dribbling rivulets of bright darkness down lettered hedges
Pebbled seeds lodged in wedged canines are foretold to never ripen.

September relieves the brambles from deciduous trees
While the sweetness renders our gums to lavender clots
And a silver tongue preaches with lyre and song
With only muses to thank for a mulberry's mythology.

Walking with a bouquet in hand

At the market on 24th I was billed for flowers
And two blocks of late light air made chilled flowers.

The hand swings, thrilled,
A man in a hard hat paints cement drilled flowers.

The petals' roots trail deeper than frills
Swallow lakes and rivers like gilled flowers

Poets vindicate those who killed power
And the love then instilled flowers.

Rosy stigmata over spilled thorns
And our hearts were the casts for rebuilt flowers.

Elegy for Your Shape

Arid brambles bear thorny
Flesh and flowering sea-fruits
That when punctured drip a sea salt tear
Down the column of my
Waxy heart. Laminated pig skin
Worships the tremble of your
Prayers and false image
Placed onto the altar at
Mass, held only during heavy nights
With blinking green lights at the end.

Your fluttering rosy fingertips
That never land, heaving breaths of
Lungs that never inhale smoke,
And a slot machine find the wave's break
And press my lips to the surface.

Neptune's spume lingers in my
Mouth, as a hardened tongue
Bleeds through bitter canines and winded thrusts
Of a desperate throat still drinking
From the halted currents at
A leisurely pace. The
Pearly pink of an old rose's
Stale pistil burns towards Spring's edge
Trailing the burst of my
Memory along the passes of your heart.

Floundering sand silts with uncertain
Hopes of days more golden
Than the Sun's flaming hair
That flicks life into this earth, ghostly
Recollection of a punctured nape
Adorned by a peeled back scab, meant to destroy
Cold trenches heaving towards the core of this
World, some flicked up sea spray as an anchor
As the mind wanders to
Splitting continents heralding impossible
Conflations, the dead now living,
Resurrected from Chronos' organs.

Atlas

Forgive my mud-drawn skin
And bright red blood,
My tethers to the dirt
From which we were fashioned,
An old man
Left hanging on peeling ceilings.
Prayer is a delicate balance
Tightroping across the splitting sea
Cupid in one hand,
Saturn in the other,
A cherub and the charlatan of the sky.

My debt to the air has no end,
My hands of bone-dry clay
Cannot mend the cracks of pangea.
Pull your peninsula to my cape,
Take some heroic stand against
The drumming of waves
Pushing the wonders of my world apart.

Forgive me for the poems
I borrowed from your mother
So I could learn to rhyme my lies,
My promises spluttering,
Always running loose with words
Pried from books with velvet covers
About by a dog so learned he could
Sit, stay, roll over.

Shepherd

I, who so often used to wish to float free
Across the stands of amber bluffs
And arenas of fraying moss fields
Prancing under the yoke of folly
And the absurdity of eternal sky
Encircled by pyramid crags
Threatening the world's end
And foiling endless cartographers,
Am content now, unbridled
Plodding about the rim of this earth
In the trace of your splintered crook
And the projection of the moon's atlas,
Even if we drowned in our winding brooks
And never found out where the cottage was.