

From a Train to Sevilla

Five blinding white windmills sprinkle
shade over a hill, and a red clay castle
rests at the top of the next. Everywhere
there are shrubs, sometimes they are trees,
in perfect drab green lines across the sunset
pink orange peach dirt that I'm sure can't
remember what water is. Every now and then
there are sheep, and the straight swaths
of trails that lead to the tops of hills, climbing
like Babel to God and the Spanish blue
brilliance of the sky. Even the rocks must
be happy here, I think, content in the still
orange soil.

Revisions

Too much an archivist, more than enamored
with the historical record, chronicling particulars,

to withdraw from the optimism of first drafts,
and distrust the consecrated dreams they embody.

Sentimental, of course, but also lacking confidence
that I've learned, developed, evolved, beyond

the unsteadiness, so sure of my words, their silent
signs, movements, and the evidence they kept, keep.

5:15am, Winter in the High Valley

At this hour, too long
before sunrise to reasonably
be awake, you cannot
see the mountain roads,

or even the hillsides they're
carved from as they angle
up from the valley you
sometimes feel glued to.

But every minute or so,
there is the momentary shine
of distant headlights, like
supernovae, flickering then

fading; early risers negotiating
the switchbacks. Cautiously,
they make their way down
the mountain from their starlit

community, ready to begin
the day before it's started.
They can't see you
as they turn, their eyes

intent on the road,
but can they know that
today, and each morning,
they are witnessed? Can

they know that these
flashes, these moments,
are the industrious hope
by which you set your watch?

Easter

Lying naked together on the fresh
laundry heaped on the bed, my foot
reaches over to the open window

and rests on the sill, warm in the sun
and tempered by breeze. I am proud
of my tensile muscles and enamored

with your willowed shoulder blades,
hips. Our torsos are filled with spring
things, sweet cinnamon pastries with

cardamom; eggs and gruyere: a gratin.
"Is there anything better than this?"
you ask, and I reply with "Nothing."

And that's exactly it, there is nothing
I can think of- my mind is clear
and there are no clouds. We have spent

the weekend discussing the theology
of Jesus' death, trying to understand
anything but the ironies of it all. But

now, lying here, I think that if I have
him to thank, even superficially,
for this moment, this occasion to love

and feel warmth, I am indebted
and don't need symbols of rebirth
because I have this spring day of

temperance. It has been warmer,
it will be cold again, but for now
my mind is clear and there are

no clouds.

The Closing Day of Fall

Everyone I know has come and gone, the party's end
begun with the sun. Loves found lost and empathies
exchanged. A jaybird's eyes turned gray and shamed.

Everything we know as lost, and anyone we thought
we knew has gone. Today our flight heads back to Berlin,
a heartsong softly cradled within. Eggshells crafted

into bowls of pearl. A tale wrapped in a winding curl.
Beds left made, a tree burned down to rid the yard
of shade. Tired lovers, slender thighs. The last surprise

did not survive the fall. The time before the time ahead
is like the sweeping leaves that graze my bed. We lost
our chance; I'll lose your fall. Empty voices wake

the hall, as the champions of snowfall alight. Lead me
down the road to our next town that the cities and
the country dust have drowned. The sky that smolders

in the dust of dusk. The fingers of the mountains frilled
with trust. Friends grow old and sell their wealth, and I
collect my lovers like shells on a shelf. Tightrope walking

octaved guitar strings, the sound belies the emptiness
of things. A floorbound hull in pitching darkened robes
has little left to fear but his own home. Vacuum shouts,

within and without, lost like rabid dogs to the pound.
Vacant bottles, disused tires; it's coming near the time
to build a fire. Fruitless flowers sing the wind and browning

branches are mirroring the hollow walls now parchment
thin, left tortured like a weight within an empty heart for let.
But there's no one around to rent. This market has been spent.