

Snowmen

The first time I built a snowman, I cried
When I saw him melt, leaving his stick arms
In a puddle on the ground.
My father, the ecologist, explained
This is the way with water.
It becomes something else, as the cold winds blow in
And it falls to blanket the earth in white.
I thought it was a better version of rain. But
When warmth returns, as it always does,
The snow unveils its truth, and will, eventually,
Return to the sky.

As the snow falls now,
And we shiver with the cold and fear of the path ahead,
We hope we'll become
Better versions of ourselves.
Maybe we will for a moment.
Or two.
But warm winds will blow in,
Unveiling our truth, to remind us
Once again, that snow is just water
Temporarily transformed.

Soil

If I dug into the rich, deep soil of you
Until the damp earth
Filled the lines on my skin
And blackened the whites of my nails,
I would pull the weeds
That entwined their roots around your soul
And plant summer flowers in spring

I'd giggle as earthworms
Tickled my fingers
And traced their life paths through the dirt

And then I would sing
As your beauty blossomed during summer storms.

My Dog Can't Read

Whenever I bury my nose
Deep enough in a book to lose myself,
My dog demands I meet his needs.

In the mid-afternoon, the clock has struck "walk,"
And with his leash, he pulls me out of my story,
Down a tree lined path, so he can sniff and sniff and sniff.
He finds the spots where other dogs pee,
Smelling the stories they leave behind.

I want speed up to burn calories.
He just wants to sniff.
I long to linger over words.
He longs to linger over smells
As he inhales the poetry of the world.
And neither of us understands
The stories the other is lost in.

Rainbows

When he asked what caused the rainbows on the wall,
I wanted to say it was a path for fairies,
Or the shadows of the gods,
But I didn't. I knew he needed to digest the
Nutritious truth
Instead of a sugary story.

When light hits the prism, I said,
It is shattered into fragments of themselves,
But the fragments don't scatter so we only see
The separate colors.

When he grew older, I bitterly criticized someone I knew.
And he reminded me about rainbows. He said
Maybe she's like the rainbow
Shattered by the prism of perception
And all you can see
Are the separate colors. Perhaps, he said,
You need to see the entire beam of light.

In Dreams

I once dreamed of Venice.
Or was it Paris?
Place is so uncertain in dreams, like a
seamstress, creating
a mismatched patchwork quilt.
I ate gelato, which dripped on the pavement
That burnt my bare toes
While I walked the streets past
A woman who danced to beckon
the rain.
as my eyes
traced the movement of her arms
that I, just like the city, was in the
midst of a drought.

It is like this in dreams, when dance precipitates
the things we long for.
I saw a reflection of the Eiffel Tower
in the puddles
I splashed through
and wondered if dancing
would be enough
to make my flowers bloom.

But I just stopped and dropped
spare change into an old man's hand.
Pointing to the image of the tower shimmering in the
water near his feet,
that is less real than fairy tale love, he told me.
I agreed with him. Like oil slick rainbows,
promising pots of gold, a truth I didn't want
to believe since this was my dream and
I just wanted to dance to bring an end to my drought.