

Poems from *The Book of Cloth*  
i.

There is a mountain lion  
and a valley lamb  
in everything.  
And they both drink  
from the same spring.

They both know  
how to get to the Center  
through fire,  
through clouds,  
through lines of pines  
and rounds of hounds,  
each with pink tongues  
in their mouths.

There is a mountain lion  
and a valley lamb  
in everything.  
And they both drink  
from the same spring.

ii.

My heart is a wild strawberry,  
in the field of my breast  
In each palm, I hold a golden leaf  
to offer you, my love.  
You give me a golden bowl  
with black twigs and bright green leaves.  
After we meet, my back is on fire  
with glowing embers  
that do not burn, but heal.  
Summer wind is my breath  
A bath of pink sunlight is my smile .

iii.

I am searching  
in a wet wood  
I am robed  
in the softest fabric  
I reach for the answer  
but it is old and dusty  
There are wet, empty  
shells of seeds  
and dried spiders,  
I shake them  
off my hands

I've found a small,  
empty glass bottle,  
and with a green feather  
given to me by a bird,  
I can dust the inside.

I walk with urgency  
and happen upon a house,  
which is visited often.  
Usually, the backyard  
is thickly covered  
with green overgrowth  
but it is clear now,  
so clear that I can see  
the water is much closer  
than I had imagined.

I had been to the house before  
and never ventured  
too far behind it,  
but I felt the water,  
heard the water,  
knew the water,

Now, I see it crystal clear  
before me, still  
a pond, still as moonlight  
white, majestic birches  
rise from the water  
and just beyond the shore,

There is an enormous grand piano  
long and noble, as if made for royal giraffes.  
I seem to remember a concert here now,  
by the owner, who only takes it  
inside in the winter.

A young woman appears  
at the edge of the pond  
who reminds me  
of my dear Estonian poet friend  
She tells me that her father,  
also a poet,  
left it outside once  
and it was totally frozen,  
but now he likes the way it sounds  
after the damage.

I see her black mustached father  
confessing this and drawing  
a curved line on the house's ceiling  
with the ash from a burnt match,  
connecting to more curved lines over the door  
His wife storms in, disapproving.  
I sit at the far right of the piano,  
to play it. It is ethereally out of tune,  
still submerged in the water.  
I imagine a skilled Australian pianist,  
an old friend, playing it masterfully.

The keys ripple into a slow march  
with the air of a melancholy lullaby,  
hitting multi-tone notes  
that ring over the birches  
into the water

Doo Doo Dum Ti Ti *Ta*  
Doo Doo Dum Ti Ti *Ta*  
doooo doooo Tee Tee

The music carries  
the lace of an echo.

iv.

Where is any fear in my body?  
I feel it mostly centered  
in my solar plexus  
That is its origin.

What does my ego look like?  
when I first see it,  
It is an ugly, crumpled thing,  
gray and black,  
formless, shriveled,  
it scares me...

Then, it turns into a fetus,  
an infant, and then, a baby fox.

My higher self,  
my ego as the baby fox, and I  
go walking down a road.  
It is made of dirt,  
the road in the Körös,  
Hungarian countryside  
of my childhood.  
There are fields of sunflowers  
on the left and lush, green trees on the right.  
Everything is pure here.  
People still bathe in bowls.  
No phones. Just sun, water,  
communication by mouth, by letter.  
The road is wide open, airy, raised up  
There are storks' nests here,  
people with fruit in baskets.  
People don't worry about the future  
because all that matters  
is eating the ripe fruit—

Here—look,  
the peach is ripe...  
and the raspberries too...  
here my darling, let's share it...  
throw it in the basket!

I feel a connection

from my red, brown earth roots  
to my rainbowed crown.  
Yes! Earth! World!  
Mother! Cosmos!  
I am here  
(spiral)

v.

Bare foot on the pine floor  
The rim of my white dress  
palms full of figs  
and papier d'or,  
one step after the other,  
the tectonics of my brain  
move the continents of my body  
where there's a fault line  
there is lava, or water, rocks, or plant roots.  
And steam is rising from between my bones,  
up, up to the clouds of my thoughts and beyond

My muscles warm and settle into their stations.  
My feet are on two bonfires  
and these pyres burn my past  
grays and blacks, the unknown,  
bunches of words and bundles of sighs,  
bushels of insults and stacks of worries,  
they all burn on the bonfires at my feet  
and let out a sweet incense.  
This body, this skin, this life of mine,  
is as much mine and as free as when I was a child!