

## The Woman Who Loves Trees

Messages of whispered thunder  
blow through outstretched limbs.  
These trees,  
these fabulous beasts  
migrate the countryside.

Falsely believe  
they move so slowly,  
return in a thousand years  
you'll see how far they've wandered,  
and measure their progress  
in a fraction of an inch

they have no reason to hurry,  
pleasing each other  
with their ever changing coats  
the crisp of the buds,  
brilliant cool green,  
the fireball of the fall,  
molting to brown in winter,  
leaving them bare  
or with linked icy jewels.

Once you were a frightened child  
open pounding fearful heart  
stopping your play  
in blue evening warmth,  
those summer nights.  
The chaos of the leaves  
the faces in the bark  
the cascade of arms  
the plunge into deep black shadows  
cast on the lawn.

Now dripping into desire,  
the child in you holds on,  
arms circling the neck  
legs wrapped around the waist  
face buried into a hollow shoulder.

The fear has burst out  
your heart refilled,

pulling the power of these trees,  
these fabulous beasts  
to the center of you.

## Comfort

The Soldier's Son's  
comfort comes  
in its own way

face pressed on his  
third grade desk  
breathing in the wood's  
sour smell,  
regulator clock  
tapping the seconds above

the sandpaper scratch  
of the razor at the face,  
just like it was  
from his father's beard  
as he sat on the toilet  
and watched.

But what of this time  
a week or so ago  
when he walked from his home,  
drove to a farm and  
leaving the car door open  
(the keyed ignition chiming  
an alarm to the stars)  
breached the fence  
and draped his body  
over the beast in the field,  
embraced the coarse hair,  
the thick hide, immense chest,  
pulled the soothing animal scent into him,  
and let the comfort come.

## Huron

Huron says little to me now  
two years after your death.  
July, and it remains shipwreck cold  
heat turns the beach from sand to ashes.

I wade out and into her –  
the clarity stuns me  
immersed  
until my body is,  
as your body was,  
once your soul was exhaled,  
cold as the bones of Shackleton's men  
cast away from the Endurance.  
How did you endure?  
The route of your path so different from mine  
I grief shriek to burst the surface  
and emerge thawed by finding hope  
and comfort in time.

That stranger on the shore  
knows nothing of it  
mouth gaping stare  
lotion in mid drip  
just some fun on the fourth.

## **Respite**

take a moment for yourself  
and let it last a thousand years

uncomplicate  
the complicated

open your eyes and imagine  
lying peacefully next to  
the river of hours  
hearing only the flow  
with no need to be  
anywhere, everywhere, nowhere

close your eyes and see  
the clouds above sunrise  
consider only your dreams  
and no one else's

stretch your body  
it connects you to this life  
let this one go  
and think of your others  
lived and done  
yet to come

unconform  
the conformity

take a moment to love yourself  
and let it last for a thousand years

## Morphology

you dream of an insect on  
your basement floor  
concerned of cockroach infestation  
it's not, but you look again  
it's larger, a stick bug, no wider  
what are those two spots on its back?  
one bug on top of another?  
look again, a giant moth?, a small bird  
it darts and fights with something else  
it grows, now hops, pecks  
a blue bird covered with dust  
the cat has it, it flies a bit,  
(if the cat allows it to)  
before being batted down  
between the forepaws  
this is a bad place to be in  
if you're a bird, or a mouse, or a bug  
you've seen it before  
prey tortured until death  
the tiny heart spent  
the cat grows larger, fills the chair  
so does the bird  
it's talons sink into the cat's arms  
a brilliant tactic  
the cat's confused, pained, lets go  
the bird becomes larger, a four legged creature  
a grey leopard. You call upstairs to your wife  
to alert her of this strange large creature  
coming out of your basement  
anticipating a scream of shock from the kitchen above  
you call out  
"just open the patio door and let it out"