

5 Poems for Six Fold

Poverty

I feel my poverty not in my empty pockets
But when the rains come
And the ground gobbles up the water
So it is like rich pudding pushing between my toes

I will go home tonight, try to wash my feet
But the earth
Will stay under my nails.
It will stain me like my want.

My feet will leave their marks in the mud
My only proclamation that I was here
But those will last no longer
Than the flutter of an eyelash.

As I listened to the rains and my mother held me,
She said don't worry, the rain is just
The tears of the gods.
But how can they make their sorrow incarnate
How can they mourn us and yet
Do nothing.

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 rooted with you
And plant summer flowers in spring

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

But don't worry I'd sing
As I cradled your baby bird heart.

Around 3

He deserts his children each day around 3
Leaving them in midswing on the tire
That hangs from the ancient tree in the backyard
Or while they sip tea with pinkies extended
Like the adults they want to be
Or while they play tug of war with the crayons
They need to create their art
Or while they are giggling or imagining or telling stories

He is a gliding centipede,
Passing over the toys and debris of family life

He drifts out of time
And away from now
And into that 3 o'clock moment

One day, maybe
His children will look into his eyes
As the hand of the clock ticks into its place,
Hugging the 3
They will see that he's not there.

Borderlands

She traced a line in the summer sand
Asked a stranger to dare her
To cross it
As if that would disappear it
His feet followed his gaze away and
Silent across the sand
Leaving her to watch the tide
smooth the sand and remind her her again and again and again
That sometimes wishes don't materialize
And sometimes the string of someone else's balloon binds
Her wrists together
And sometimes she knows that the only thing she can do
Is to hide the ocean in her memory
And return to the road

She drove towards home
But when the exit came
She went straight
Past the sign that said
Welcome to Pennsylvania

And the words "if not now,
When?"
Echoed in the empty car
She accelerated
And imagined the rush of gas was like the rush of her own blood or
the rush of mere expectation that crossing this border
would be crossing to a new life

She closed her eyes
Felt the rush of disappointment
Just like when she kissed her best friend,
Felt his scruff exfoliate her chin
Crossing that border too
Left her disappointed
Like a blue balloon
Caught
In the branches
Of an old pine tree

Autumn

If autumn happened in the spring
Green would no longer be the color of hope
The future would shine in orange's warmth

If autumn happened in the spring
we would no longer stick out our tongues,
anticipating the snowflakes
so white like the color of death
and leave only their nothing taste

If autumn happened in the spring
the crunch of leaves
would echo like the melodic voice of
your lover singing of new beginnings

If autumn happened in the spring
We would fear the fall no more
as we opened ourselves instead of pulling our
straightjacket coats tighter around us to keep out the cold

If autumn happened in the spring
time would seem unbound
since nature broke her own rules
and you could do the same
untwisting your tongue tied up by order
and the fiery truth could fly
like an explosion of orange leaves
that usher in white flame blossoms

If autumn happened in the spring
Youth's impetuosity would temper age's careful step
And you could be once again
That child who skipped recess to throw
Reckless darts with the beautiful blue eyed boy
Just because

If autumn happened in the spring
you could curl into him as he sang quietly into your hair
the daybreak sun tinted candlelight bright by the leaves
you could curl into him in the morning
so warm and firm as you yield to
the sweet smell of his skin like

an invitation
or fireworks