

# GOLD AS EVER

## An Apology to the Bee

If I must die, I hope it all makes sense:  
the fact that bees are born for the flowers sake,

how the boy across the street pulled  
the scary, buzzing thing from my tangled  
chlorine locks. Wrong place, wrong time?

Did it know something I don't?

Did I come to this world a dandelion?  
Could I leave it a wish in the wind?

Did it confuse me for hope  
and try to deposit life into some dying thing?

Was it God? Was it me, God? Memory  
is a funny thing. We hosed it out of my hair  
on high speed, *a quick death*, we told ourselves,

8 years old, a summer that ended.  
Am I supposed to still feel this way?

A jar of honey in my cupboard.  
Jesus, I should go vegan.

*Dear Bee,*

*I hope death sings. I hope it forgives  
and forgives. I hope that it is me, returning to*

*that pool to pluck you from the string  
of time with gentle hands and toss you  
into that always golden July.*

Feather

was it love  
did it sing  
did we know the tune already

could you hear it from over there  
the laughter  
does it seem like it happened  
so quickly  
does it seem like it's  
still happening

your mouth in the air, sipping the sky  
body of water  
mine in yours  
did you think it was love  
did you really

*mother said, keep for yourself a secret  
hold at least one thing  
against your chest, keep it hidden and yours  
far from him*

*souvenir*  
mother said a lot of things

do you know the clouds  
are they wonderful

or bloated  
bruised  
violence everywhere

but you get it  
honey-like  
running and sticking

boomerang

a crow fed  
far too much  
by the neighbor

was it beautiful

was it kind

can you still

taste it and was it rich  
was it good  
did you cum

boomerang

it still feels inevitable  
all my returning

in my dream

there was a brushfire

did it get you  
did it get you  
did it get you

## Soil

I've built something of a life in your absence,  
and it has hurt me, learning  
to bathe a new body, but

I've begged the water enough  
to scrub me clean of sorrow, and  
someone suggested I just keep it.

So, there's a gift here: I can still love  
the burning house in my memory; I can  
warm my hands against the fire and thank it

for the heat. To love my suffering is to love,  
that devotion eternal: surviving  
on Thomas Lane with our beat up

station wagon that smelled like cigarettes  
and three paychecks; in the bathtub,  
my peach fuzz and your blade

in the eighth grade; in the cremation office,  
me and Audrey and your sister  
with all those papers and pens,

acknowledgements and praise.  
All of this to say: I will keep it.  
*Detritus has anti-aging properties,*

that's what they're saying, so  
let it heal my wounds, make me naïve  
and bright and ready and real,

like that buttercup under your chin  
in the tall grass of my youth:  
gold as ever.

## Support / Surrender

I was jealous of the dog  
he urged to sleep between us,

watching him mother her, love  
her, serpentine around her broad

chest and squeeze. I was obedient,  
too. Damn near wore a collar, devotion

like a tattoo on my face – conspicuous.  
I came when called, lied upon request,

but he already had that dog. He wanted me  
to be a tree: impregnable, unmoving, my spine

a dense web of branches, all enduring his grip  
to aid sensation, dependable stillness. Then, when rain

would sneak under his palms, between his fingers, trying  
to liberate me, conserve my life, given away, I saw

he could not suffer the rain, but I could suffer him.  
Snapping my limbs to break his fall, I'd watch him

land gently in this bed, each time, holding  
tenderly his pup. I wanted to be loved

like her, not for altruism, might,  
or remarkable patience, but

for how small and beautiful I was  
because that was no labor,

just luck.

## Peaks of Otter

I stand on the very edge  
of the very edge, at the other side of  
curiosity's twine, connected lamely  
to the dirt, searching eagerly within  
earth's bounty with eyes given  
from love to love, that breath stroke.  
I spot Abbott Lake and seek the beyond:  
tiny houses with their bite-sized people and their  
bite-sized lives, trinkets on the mantel, the dog  
in the yard, and even further, their laughter.  
All of it there, away from my meddling. I find  
my hazel gold now burdened with wet and warm,  
not in awe of it opening so unknowingly, so  
gracefully before me, but in realizing  
that my time will end before  
I ever get to touch it all.