

## FIVE POEMS

### **Against Aubade**

Tonight ensconced in your firm fragrant arms,  
As tender as new bride and blushing groom,  
Tight swaddled, warm, as in the rounded womb,  
Let's hold each other close and bless our stars.  
Protected from dark morning's dawning gloom  
And day's insistent breast-beating demands,  
We think, not with our brains, but with our hands  
Two shuttles, back and forth, across a loom.

Redeemed, replete, released from tales and lies,  
Misunderstandings quarrels and remorse,  
Inevitable failures of discourse,  
In silence finally our tongues grow wise.  
Bedazzled by kind nighttime's sweet deceits  
We dread the dawn's unraveling defeat.

## FIVE POEMS

### **Birthday Lunch**

What I wanted to say was, you're still the most beautiful woman  
in the world. It's kind of nice to see you.

What I wanted to say was, I've been dreading this all week.

What I wanted to say was, I refuse to dredge any more lakes for  
your dead bodies. I don't have the credentials to absolve you.

Also: If it's my birthday, how come you get all the goodies?

What I wanted to say was, I love the way you laugh at my jokes.

There is so much about me you'll never know.

I wanted ask why you have to be the gift that keeps on taking.

It kills me that I still love you, was another thing I didn't mention.

What I wanted to say was, you birthed me but I created myself.

What I wanted to say will always stand

between us.

## FIVE POEMS

### **Death and the Rainbow**

We began our flight with  
gaily colored globules --  
all the bubble gum a  
five-year-old could  
possibly  
chew.

We touched down in a kind of  
Oz where oranges grew on  
trees instead of in plastic  
netted bags from the  
supermarket.

Fairy-tale Florida!  
Sun shone, palms shimmered,  
clean-smelling aqua  
splash pools punctuated  
every lawn. Houses  
wore tropical shades that  
made my mother's red  
lipstick look almost  
sad.

I do recall an ambulance.  
I saw men carry my grandpa  
away on a stretcher.  
He was sick, which is much  
easier to understand  
than dead.

But what I remember best was  
the rainbow, my first. When my  
mother parted the curtains, pointed  
at what until that moment had  
been myth, I knew something  
Important  
had happened.

## FIVE POEMS

### **Journal Entry**

She keeps her old journals  
in her old bedroom  
in plain view.

How I envy her!

She assumes  
as I once assumed  
a daughter's trust  
isn't temporal  
as anesthesia.

Her heart's chambers  
haven't been slit open,  
scrutinized by maternal  
surgeons.

Structurally sound,  
she stands firm,  
inviolable.

I love to see,  
I love to watch,  
the light flash in  
her eyes.

## FIVE POEMS

### Twisted

You can keep your pink hyacinth white noise dark predictions locations of your  
choosing stove where you doctored my dinners dining table you refused to eat  
at phone for monitoring my conversations funerary trophies

you can keep your twisted hyacinth its blue pot your aches pains diagnoses  
whiteners inhalers performance enhancers secret stashes empties rain checks  
expensive bicycle  
gift too heavy for me to lift the tent we never went camping in the bathing suit you  
never wore to join me for a swim the mirror you used to watch yourself

you can keep your twisted hyacinth in its blue ceramic pot  
your medals trophies certificates broken bones road rash  
saddle sores ointment bandages gauze hydrogen peroxide  
statistics coupons tax deductions investments bonus  
points safety-deposit-box ephemera

keep it its blue ceramic ornamental pot your oil  
burner laundry coffee machine mowers whackers  
clippers cutters drills screws curtain drain rock  
garden weed killer attic anachronisms you can  
have your side of the bed mine too along with  
the kids' old bedrooms and cat burial sites.  
Also hang onto your tales of woe heroic  
myths humble opinions moral high ground  
clogged auditory canals

enough with the hyacinth's garish blossoms  
gifts you gave in hopes of being forgiven  
unsynchronized clocks sleepless nights  
hypervigilant days sports radio insects  
flying in always always where screens  
should be

I hereby bequeath to you your own brilliance  
grudges tales of betrayal summary judgments  
blind spots righteous indignation and feel free  
to keep whatever you remember of our kids  
childhood as well as assorted photographic  
evidence that you at least were happy

please keep the twisted hyacinth in its  
blue ceramic ornamental pot with its  
garish short-lived blossoms

## FIVE POEMS