

What Matters

Take your hands off the wheel
foot off the break
don't put it in park
forget about curbing the wheels.

Open the door and walk
into the woods
or over the vast plains
or across the plateau
or up the side of a rocky mountain.

Glass and steel will carry you
through linear constructs
to leaving and arriving
passing too fast to see or care.

Let your feet awaken your soul
to what is real
and what matters.

This thing, Death

Meet Death at its own door

Knock
but do not cross the threshold

Wait
Death may be in some distant room
up the stairs with lost souls
in the cellar conferring with the weak of mind
and those of maligned character.

Do not turn away.

Knock again
Death may be hard of hearing (who knows?)
or may have thought the sound
only branches knocking in the wind.

For who would knock on Death's door
without Death knowing well in advance.

Even in sudden death
Death knows.

Knock again
but do not cross the threshold.

Death will answer
It will shutter at your vibrant light
at the brilliance of your health
its mouth will fall open aghast, but

Death will recover from the surprise
grow humble and greet you
like the kindly old lady next door
who smells of baking cookies and vanilla.

Do not cross the threshold
Do not speak
Do not turn away
Stand and look Death in the eye (are there eyes?).

Look with fervid attention
beyond the withered gray fleshy shadow

beyond the ragged black cloak
beyond the cloying stench of roses in faded bloom.

This thing, Death
It is smaller than your life

it is a short sudden flash
or a dull thing that lingers.

It is so much less than what each new day brings
so much less than the cycling seasons of life
so much less than the brilliance
of your own living presence.

Leave Death at its own door
the way you left Birth at your mother's womb
walk into your life (like you mean it)
Leave the shadows and the sulking fear behind.

Take a turn with the Moon

Take a turn with the moon
down the silent path
bubbling in joy
through the darkness burnished silver.

Take a turn with the moon
forget the world of the sun
abandon yourself
the silence of the night blooms
filling your senses.

Now take the path up the hill
step out of yourself
make a new creature of yourself
alive in your new world
build it with delights of your making.

Take a turn with the moon
forget the world of the sun.

Dear Lucy

That hip & pelvis, wide, accommodating. That she predates all mothers. Hominini of the river valley
'You are marvelous' - Lucy in the sky with diamonds.

We carry those glistening strands like ladders to the stars, back to the dust of beings, made real & live in flesh, our wide pelvic bones

accommodating dreams & desires, creating so many beings, up to *Be Here Now*, fantastical beyond that early mother's imagining from a simple, skull filled with tough teeth for chewing.

Imagine all the people, living today, passing though those wide pelvis on to bigger & better things, like the one who birth me, gone- into that desert valley,

shrouded in a cloud of dust and ancient time round a watch face without hands, all meaningless numbers, round and round again. I counted to six at your knee, you counted onward to nineteen and then flew,

leaving behind boxes, memories of broken glass and coffee grounds staining the kitchen table brown, the one with the white formica top and the broken leg that no one bothered to fix;

3x5 note cards, *'Manicotti alla Nona'*, *'Spaghetti sauce (sweet & savory)'*, *'My Man's Cookies (Grandma Bertha's)'*. Ingredients in slanted cursive with flare. Ink faded, paper scarred by tomato, creamed butter and sugar, the ring of a teacup;

black and whites- images of mostly you. That cocktail dress- pink to magenta beehive hair, then colored red, loopy with wide curls, lacquered into place, the way your mother taught you.

Left behind in the endless footsteps, traces of mothers, and mothers, and mothers, I'd write a letter, or yell it through the Grand Canyon, the echoes touching ancient layers where your exhales settled, *a dusty fragment of you ends in my empty womb.*

Wait

Wait by the window, you said
until the dew lifts and the Jacobin cuckoo calls.

Then come to me
and we will fly behind the sun and linger
where the waters run shallow in the silver.

But I forgot your words
the night was a hundred years, plus one day.

The dew never lifted
Jacobin cuckoo went extinct
night fixed itself in my window.

My eggshell heart glued hard,
imperfect.

By the light of an angel
I passed the time
making winged joy
and watching it fly.