

## **Tangerine Marmalade**

Morning sun glitters on the jar and spoons,  
how long ago we ate  
our first breakfast together

Venus turns counter-clockwise,  
the sun rises in her west  
she has no moon

Last night the sunset filled  
the sky with raspberry sherbet,  
soon the waxing moon rose tangerine

What if we could go counter-clockwise,  
if we watched the sun rise in the west,  
if there was no moonlight?

All our breakfasts would slip away, setting  
in the east as clocks turn backwards until  
the jar and spoons are alone at the table

## **Elegy at a Yard Sale**

*A house can be haunted by those who were never there. Louis MacNeice*

Under an awning wait the furnishings,  
exposed and alone without the house,  
emptied of the maple table  
where the first sun shone each day  
on coffee cups and worn silver spoons,

emptied of the four-posted oak bed  
where they loved and awoke, emptied  
of the matching bureau whose drawers  
held their socks and underwear.

The house is empty of the cradle  
where their children first slept, empty  
of carpets and chairs, of knives, spoons  
and forks, of mops and of clocks;  
its window panes reflect bare floors.

Everything waits in the yard where signs advertise the sale,  
two crows swoop low, curious about the glittering  
bauble, while the house waits for the final passage  
of its furnishings. The clocks are silent.  
A car door slams and the first sales begin.

The crows caw once, twice, and circle over;  
soon the oak bureau then their maple table,  
bed and baby cradle then the clocks are gone.  
The house is empty, too bright and too quiet.

## **Daylight Saving Time**

Orange sun drops behind trunks of an elm  
on the first night of Daylight Saving Time,  
down the road two dogs bark back and forth,  
up in the woods two barred owls call all night,  
eight hoots then eight more in reply.

Today we saved time and daylight, changed all  
the numbers on the clocks and made the sun  
set an hour later than yesterday—  
but tomorrow dawn will come an hour later.

Down the road the same two dogs howl,  
in the woods barred owls still call,  
burnt orange sun slips behind elms  
a few minutes later and we're  
24 hours older. In the autumn  
we'll give it all up, set the clocks back,  
knowing that we're losing time.

## **Could We Be?**

What if we could be coyotes who howl high on the hill  
behind the house, whose ancestors mated with wolves?

What if we run with our pack at night hunt  
voles, rabbits, even neighbors' chickens?

What if we romp through the backyard at midnight,  
yowl at the moon, run right under the ladder  
leaning against the garage, circle the Subaru, grin  
in its cracked side mirror, moon over our ears?

What if leap across the yard, howl to frighten humans,  
share voles, munch bones, smile, fresh blood and hair  
on your teeth, what if we kill the family cat?

What if we howl high on the hill before dawn,  
then sleep all day in our burrow in the roots  
waking only to lick each other's ears?

## **Ghost Dancers at Wounded Knee**

A hundred forty-four Ghost Dancers and their children  
massacred and thrown into a trench that December—  
a single granite monument marks their grave  
in the cemetery at Wounded Knee.

Rifles crackled and blood turned to ice on snow,  
west wind blew knife-cold out of the Black Hills—  
today summer breeze whispers on Pine Ridge.

Ghost Dancers' shirts, frayed by bullets,  
embroidered with dyed porcupine quills,  
colors faded after a hundred twenty winters,  
still clothe Lakota bones buried at Wounded Knee.

Pine Ridge Reservation is silent,  
except for the crackle of cavalry rifles,  
the voices of the Hunkpapa and Miniconju,  
the cold echoes of children's screams,  
except for voices of Ghost Dancers on the wind.

