

Rain on New Years Day

She wakes up to a shower
water flowing in all her rivulets and gullies
washing away last year's sin
street grime and soil pooling

in her hollows
before filtering down
through her tired and fallow crust
tickling the nodes of her

quenching the beginnings of her
she lets it melt her down
wet and clean and newborn
she lets it saturate into her loam

spongy and fertile and lush
she lets it carry all the dust and sadness
slick down her arching, aching back
so she may rise

glistening tomorrow
shake it off in sprays and sheets and folds
unsullied and
swollen with hope.

Daughter

Have we met before?
Before you rose
like a purple cherub
from my womb
Before you fluttered
your butterfly wings
in my stomach
Before the kiss
of your imagined existence
settled itself
inside the chalk of my bones
Before you waited
ephemeral and ancient
a pause
in the company of star stuff

We've met before
I'm sure
In a meadow
under a mushroom
on a dust mote
through a sunbeam
in the space between electrons
under the crook of an arm of a galaxy
behind the pupil of an eye
in the crater of a hawk moon

January woods

The forest is holding its breath;
not in anticipation,
just a pause,
the stillness after
a great sigh.

Its veins, that a few months before
had been languishing
towards the sun
and pulsing
with fat chloroplasts,

are pulled in tight around the stone
of its living heart;
leaving the warmbloods
to the busy tasks
of shiver, scatter and scurry.

The air is sharp, a blade to the throat,
reminding us,
in our hairless swagger,
that we lack
the fur, the fortitude

and the forward-thinking to last
even one night exposed;
that we are insolent
subordinates
who have forgotten our place.

Yes, perhaps I should take a knee
at the feet of these
stately sycamores,
bow my head and beg
for mercy.

Along the Creek

it is an act of magic

how water can turn a gray river rock
emerald green
as if its brilliance was just waiting patiently
for this moment of consequence

how as we age even our most lucid and
palpable fantasies
snap and scatter like wishbones and smoke
only to be reborn through surrender, cracked
and imperfect and wonderful

The Silence That Follows

In the silence that follows
there is always
choking.
the way too many words
can smother
what used to be love
or decades
of things unspoken
will empty out the lungs.

Who can remember
whose pain came first:
mother or child?
it's just there
immortal
seeping out of
every forced smile
every swallowed retort
every tiptoed reply,

Until it bursts
Pressure-cooked
Like a volcano
Raining down
Syllables and decibels
Lava filling
The chasm
Deafening
Ear-splitting
The pain rises up
A winged scorching monster
Spawned
From a miasma
As old as
Generations.

And then
in the echo
in the char
in the hollowed-out place
there is
the silence that follows.