

Blue Glass Sea

The sea was blue glass today
far below the waving grasses
only tiny ripples pushed onshore
to meet the faint white fog
like a gauze curtain blowing
in a window, lifting when a door
opens in another room, all day
the light swam pale until sunset
when the glowing began--
layers of magenta and coral
wavered along the wide horizon,
a small plane paralleled the cliffs
disturbing the air, its engine drone
striking the guava tree, fruit littering
the ground underneath, the dirty cat
pulled her ears back, ignored the brilliance--
the blue glass is black now
not reflecting the Milky Way.

Inner Landscapes

I am a long beach with fog drifting
coldly down the flat sand, the sun
can't break through to warm the air,
tiny sanderlings run up and down
following the quiet lapping
of this calm sea.

I pull my sweater closer
around my neck and keep walking
to the rhythm of the waves with tiny
drops of salt in my hair.

Make me this long foggy beach:
the air swirling damp and gray even at noon,
my footsteps disappearing in the wet surf,
pools between the mussel-crusting rocks
collecting my thoughts at low tide
like closed anemones, gulls crying
their pains in the oppressed air
of salt drops and seaweed.

Sleeping at the Barn

At the end of darkness comes light:
my dream bursting across the open road
and fields splashed in the morning glow
up to the dark beams of the old barn
where the swallows nest
in their communal noises.

I lie on the hard earth and watch them fly
through the gaps in the roof to hunt insects
and drink from muddy irrigation ditches.
My visions disappear now as if sinking
into last night's shadows under the electric
wires where bats swooped in the hunt.

I attend the scattered silence of bird calls
without resisting the new-gathering day,
notice the pauses as the bottom falls out
of my former lives.

Patiently I wait, breathing in the alfalfa
perhaps to sleep again with the sun pushing
through my eyelids making white-hot stars--
the opposite of the black and white pattern
stippled under the valley oaks as the sun
filters through their fluted leaves
like a day time Milky Way.

A Moment at Dusk

There is a moment at dusk
when the breath of the sky
becomes visible as pink
coral clouds glowing
momentarily where previously
there were none
or merely white puffs
and just as suddenly
they fade again to colorless
pale night

but for that moment
the ending day shines
and the coming dark
like a processional marches
brighter than even the moon.
The eventual stars
will remember that exhaling
of light and shed it
back to us in fractured
bits of glass

the crickets will repeat
for us the throbbing pulse
of our quickening eyes
when we gathered those brief
pink and orange rays
but failed to hold them
beyond what they allow us
our puny arms not equal to
the holding of the world
as dusk expires.

Moon Light

Through the skylight
the full moon splashes
gray-white opalescence

not a new task-- every month
it rises roundly yellow against
the liquid amber and white oak
street trees or the power lines'
steel towers across the mud
flats at low tide

with the distant lights
on the bare hills
shining across the bay

every month is not a new
thing, we may count on its
regular appearance like
a dream of a lover
returning
recurring
a loss that never leaves
this its white reminder,
the round face of what
we must remember
or are forbidden to forget

so we need to notice
every time, even as we
forget his face exactly
now, and his arms--
the moon feels colder
these days
through the electric wires
the plane trees
the skylight
on my single bed.