

## **Grasping for God**

I've called to you thousands of times  
Messages sent in whispers and post-it notes  
On the wings of birds and planted in seeds  
Between the lines of books and in bathtubs  
Soapy and sober, but not enough of either

I screamed for you thirty years ago  
You could have had me then, and almost did  
But instead peered into my wrinkled brain and left stress and air and being  
You promised hope and cures, unconditional love and freedom  
If lucky and wealthy enough to have them

I've tried to come back to you; you'd know if you read my letters  
Not sure where you've been  
In the hurricanes and plagues; disasters and brutality  
In my numb home; you have my address  
You have the answers.

## **Joy**

Seven cuts from the rose bush  
Beauty is pain only when sought after  
Seven roses; eternal thorns  
In a broken vase to match broken skin

Seven sips of wine so red it bleeds back in  
Veins thundering with this cavernous echo  
I can hear the locusts' secrets and the sparrows planning a coup  
The smell of grass stretching to the sun

Seven minutes until the steak turns cold  
Us carnivores suddenly bored and embalmed in disagreement  
You leave in anger and the roses lean me in  
Now we can be alone.

### **Wine and Mirrors**

White wine, for winners  
Red blends and water for Catholics and Saints  
The pure and the putrid  
Swirled in tandem with tannins and long, cynical legs  
This bottle was emptied hours ago.

Glass shards, a Reserve, peppered across the linoleum  
Or was it the Red I drank, to imbibe life and God at once  
To become the mortal equivalent of a martyr  
A Giant Among Men  
No – just too drunk with inadequacy  
To know the difference.

Will one look take me down the rabbit hole  
Drunk, with Alice,  
Like the looking glass before?

### **He**

He's saved me twelve times since Sunday  
My modern Jesus  
Turning coffee cups upside down, to sweet wine  
Poured out and then in, to my lips  
Deeper than the color of familial blood

He's known me in ways I never will

Yet he stays

And bathes me with lavender and epsom salts,

When my muscles and mind drown me down

While his own joints and bones disintegrate

He's kept and slept on my many secrets

My faults and failings

He takes them in with forgiveness

And sleeps next to me, even still

While I lay wide awake

Gratefully indebted.