

We, too, are nature.

Leeches

If I do *that*,
If I say “yes,
this is hurting me,”
and let it hurt,
rather than numbing the hurt,
ignoring the weakness,
will it cling to me
like a leech?

Is that what hurt does?
I can't remember.

Is it a rock
that gets thrown
and leaves a bruise
but then falls at our feet
at our disposal
so that we decide
if it gets thrown again?

Or is it a leech
that attaches itself to us
while we are most mindlessly
being ourselves,
sucking us dry of the parts
most ourselves—
the very blood of our personalities,
marrow of our souls—
leaving our veins coursing
with nothing but
hot, thick air?

Because it feels like the leech,
not the rock,
and I want the rock.
Send in the rocks.

I can take the rocks,
for I am already numb.
I cannot take the leeches,
for I am already empty.
And I'm scared of what
they will take
once they've run out
of my blood
and my marrow.

I bet it tastes good
to them, too.
Because I know
I was full.
I remember
being so full.

Going Back

What is a home if not a place to stay sedentary
While the great big world is opening all around us
And who are you if not one person already part of me
Amidst a million souls begging to be known

But the great big world will never feel like the chest
Used to the weight of my head
And the people I meet will never love me to the depths
Of those who have had to forgive me
And all the joy and celebrations won't be nearly as full
When they aren't shared with those with whom I've also mourned

Prayer for a Hard Season

We, too, are nature
And we know
Because we, too
Grow
Molt
And pass through seasons
We evolve
Adapt
And come one day to perish

Were we not nature
The earth would not accept our bodies
Into itself so easily
We are leaves
Falling
Feeding
Passing life on

We are trees
Shedding
Stripped and laid bare
Awaiting the promise of new life

We are rivers
Run dry
Awaiting melted snows
To fill our banks again

We are skies
Vast
Even when dark
Carrying light

We are wood
Burned
But also built
Nature shielding nature

Who condemns the flower
That loses its petals
Under heavy rains
Or blames the vine
For bearing no fruit
When the days are long and dry

You are nature
Bask in you

A Psalm

I grow weary
My legs grow weak
The path ahead of me grows steep
I do not ascend

Joy saturates
Air at the summit
Those who reach it
Breathe in deeply
But I am faint
The air I breathe is thin

Fill my empty
Gasping lungs
Soothe the pain
Of the blisters
Rubbed raw
From the digging in
Of the heels
Balm my vulnerable flesh
Burned by the sun

Bring along a fellow traveler
Calloused by the blisters
Skin peeling from the sun
That we might walk farther
Though it seems futile
Arm around waist
Arm around waist

Might you level the slope
Only now and again
So we might feel sturdy ground
Beneath our tired feet
So our lungs might be reminded
How it feels to deeply breathe
That we might rest for a moment
From that which ails us

That our minds might
Loosen their fixations
On that which must be done
To survive
And that in that space
Our thoughts might find
Their way back to the purpose
Of the striving
And that we might
Once again
Find the striving
Exceedingly worth it

Real v. True

The sadness felt so real
Thick in her lungs
Heavy around her ankles
But the day the joy cut through
Felt true

If the sadness was real
Like the tears
That fell from her
Tired and distant eyes
The joy was true
Like the freckles
The sun spread
Across her nose
Though she didn't feel them
Smiling to her temples
They simply were

If the sadness was real
Like the rain
That fell upon her
Apathetic and leaden frame
The joy was true
Like the new life
Brought to the plants
She had forgotten
Whether or not she took part
Blooming all around her
Life simply was

The joy was always there
The truest thing about her