

Poems from My Inner World

Mornings

This Daily Poem

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Mornings

When I arise
From the coolly nighted room
My flesh drips freshly
From my frame.

From the soft drifting of my sleep
I am new fallen snow
Without a track.

This Daily Poem

This daily poem
Washes the face of my soul
And reminds me of
My reality
Which must be cast up
(Wave on wave,

Amorphous shapes)
Leaving only some coral reef
Of recent death

A Sabbath in the Heart

On Friday eve the heart cadences,
The mind must mind the sabbath
All the grasses are calm
The forehead becomes a level plain
The water no more shatters the moon
But rests
For the sabbath hath calm

The stitches between the brow are cut
The fingers release the tool, even pencils shush
The breath strokes the body
Rocking the cradle with the lightest breeze
Murmuring, “rest, rest, rest,”
As dumb fingers on feet
Lay in slumber in a row
For the sabbath hath calm

Words fall away unsaid
There is no need
The calm of the spirit
Hangs in the air
There can be no up nor down
Nor East nor West
As the back leans against the wall
And the weight of the flesh
Turns to stone
The moss of hair so soft
For the sabbath hath calm

The Bumps on my Arms

The bumps on my arms
Tell me that I am cold
And some other day
I shall be neither cold nor warm
But something else.
And I smile at those bumps
And I sing this song to them
Because they are a sign
That I live in this form
Fleshly warm
In this day
Freshly aired

It Is the Routine Act

It is the routine act
That one must love
It is the brushing of teeth
The windowed sky
Angled over your bed
The table setting
Breakfast made and unmade
Each daily stitch
To be pulled out
As in Penelope's loom
Embracing both day and night
Enthralled in the arms of
Indifferent time

I Want to Grasp This Instant

I want to grasp this instant,
I want to lay hold of it
And like Hector be
Dragged
Where it pulls me.

I circle the walls once.
Already my soiled hair resembles fine roots.

There is no container for time,
No vase for its bloom.
It is forever in a state of coming:
It comes to die.

Come Rain

Come rain
Come cold
Let me see my enemies
What face
What hands
Chisel my face
My faith
My heart
I want to grapple
Pull
Rip
Scream
Recognize your face
As I recognize your handiwork
In my bathroom mirror

The Distant Bell

The distant bell
Tells
That some measurement
Has been fulfilled,
And that pink aura
That the sky suffused,
Received by my half-lidded
Eye
Has fled with the pinkness
And will not return
Even in the field of my mind.

We try to master time,
(Indiscriminately irrevocable)
Dip our hand, fingers spread apart
Into its current.
Who can fragment flows
And chain together like equal links?
The wet fingers are washed clean of the
Water that has passed
And once removed
Become dry and dumb as
Sticks.

Where Had the Greenness Gone

Where had the greenness gone
Leaving only ashen remains
Of charcoal gray and
Light gray
And lighter grays
Shifting in the
Light before dawn?

A sumi-e of trees
framed by the window
monochromatic kaleidoscope
as restful
as engrossing
as fire
as water—

Staining the silver sky,
Summer shadows soothed
the bounty
of my autumnal heart.

Late-Fall Porch

Late-fall porch
screens striped with rain
Spider's high-wire circus
shines
watery sequins
highway drone sounding
snare drum roll
the chairs and I seated
await the tightrope artist in
cool November air

In the Quiet of My Mind

In the quiet of my mind
I spread a web
to catch the drifting seeds
the way I catch this morning
that now spreads itself aloft
Pulled up by the few luminous puffs,
that light opening at the top of the sky
all else is gray green and blue gray

Through the sea of air I see
the bottom; the sculptured clouds.
How I would love to walk there
but it is only in the web of my
silent mind
catching the yellow green grasses
there only there
that my booted feet
trample hills of stars

Without the Gods

Without the Gods
There is only
Time to
Be born
Be dead
And the finite
Moments
Measured
By pain,
Pleasure
Pulled out
Or compressed
By the
Brain.

Only love in bed
Opens a
Transcendence
Of time
And place
And in that
Spiritual moment
Shutters the
Eye
Of Death.

Three Epitaphs

Death,
Gather me in your arms
And stop my breath with a kiss

Grass,
Take root in my heart
And grow out my mouth

Empty eye-sockets,
Catch rain
And create tiny skies

Like Phaethon

Like Phaethon
My unskilled hands
Are not equal
To the force
And the fury
Of the horses of
My heart.
I wheel in my course
Wildly careening
Too close to the sun,
Singeing my eyelashes,
Yet unable to stay
Or guide
The surging forward
Of their unshod hooves.

Botticelli's Venus

It is right that Venus came on a scallop shell.
The seas bear her naked shape with ease
The winds breeze gently,
Her civilized right had scarcely shelters her heart.
Some flowers, caught in mid-air, must soon fall.

See her face.
She knows that she comes to change and die
And be swept in with the tide again and again.

It is right that she comes with the sea.
Could love exist without wetness?
Without saliva, without sweat, without tears, without swarming
semen?
Even her hair falls like water from a mountain top.

Dare her uncalloused feet alight onto the soiled shore?