

# Poems from My Inner World

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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?