

The Dreaming Half

Swaying power lines open up a path
on twin tight ropes strung to coiled ports
and rood wood. Now we'll cross the city
like particles, our satchels filled with frost.

Below was a mass grave, without evidence
of mischief. A lie rubbed bald within days.
“I come to speak for your dead moths,”
I said, gathering souls with my claws.

The word “decimation” woke me up
with a kiss cracking into deci, deci, deci,...,
Nine times these birds show me how
the dawn breaks into song.

Night of Salt

(after Neruda, mistranslated)

Dead Maria, yellow star, obstreperous angels
made of angels, impregnate the night waters
of fountain street. Professionally curious,
with resplendent condensation, sub-celestial drops
fall across the meridian that separates day from day.
Men of eyes and moneyed arms hold the mirrored creatures,
their triangular smiles, lighted eyes,
eat what's lonely and broken,
their bone intentions assist the end of the community,
clothing it in night for the days of substitution.

Winding Sheet

A regurgitated stick falls into the poem.
Thank dog. Blue heeler can't bear to be idle,
restless muse. What is missing? What is missing?
Prophet or condemned man in the empty chair?
Search footnotes for the words you need.

The air brings a barbeque bouquet,
ribbons of meat tickle the predator nose.
the blue heeler gives a knowing look.
Mother disrupts the order. Reboot this
when these words freeze with a pinwheel.

Mud wasps and paper wasps spit out
their homes. I am the secret admirer
of a tree. I snuggle into its crook, sorrow
at its giant limb amputated to a black plate.
I wonder how many decades felt that hurt.

A drop of grape liquefaction, heads south—
must from a spring gland, pungent as herring
in onion sauce, a crumb in the beard, a grease
spot on gabardine, a clot of sweet cheese.
We all drip with the inscrutable past.

A gift covered in spit is still a gift.
Ingratitude is still a sin. The crotchet remains
but not the fingers. Dreams stage rendezvous
with the dead. The atmosphere condescends,
two heavy copper eyelids dip.

The tree will slowly enter negotiations,
becoming polyamorous with the flower beds.
Mother weeds as her clean sheet swallows
your wet clothes. It seems less peaceful
than you'd want a winding sheet to be.

Word Church

April brings us to exodus, where
we arrive in a reclining position.
Canaan used to mean tomorrow.

Oh, today is dull and adamant.
I know why this night is different,
Our newborn wings have gone

out of phase. Bees handle snakes.
We ask for faith, give up leavening,
dust the fallen with mineral salts.

Vultures are landing in threes,
the last drawn to a vanishing point,
sober wings folded like napkins.

We keep the taste of destruction
hidden in our mouths. Flies are
drunk on the juice of our bruises.

An even diffusion of light wakes
the corners, maroons us on a perch.
The epiphany chorus is singing