

Whale fall

It happens slowly,
it is what we might
call; unsettling we women
in rubber tanks we,
rings indexes and thumbs
extending beyond
our umbilical chords

and death is,
deaths are
are costumes changes, are confessions
are, whale falls

Seabed to palace
To bone construction and corseted towers
Slumber and splendour
decomposing humbly, for the crowd
we, onlookers; we shadows

advance upwards like Ivy
Tourists toward the sun, beckoning.
Beneath, dust settles
and disperses light amid the tombless

and now, we know
That these, are afterlives
That these, are heavens

Perhaps to decipher age, from colour
ignores length, ignores style
the hair and her craft
disregards
the neat narrative, split endings

but white as winter,
white as doves, still.
Like window light or burnt diamond
to, decipher calendars
from seasons, ignores such opera
overlooks brush strokes and is careless

to keep count of days and
not collect samples from their palettes
mistaking white for winter
and winter, for death
and death as man.

Winter, a cold snake or bear resting
resembles the gasping chimney

The eyes
step backwards

bowing to the skull
reading the marrow cylinders

this skin a flimsy place holder
the hair, flying from its nest; brows, lashes
scatter themselves as ash

lips leave you, leave youth
this face turns to rind, the fruit
beneath,
all your worth.

A Sermon

I want not
to be taken
by you, tree
 I intend nothing
 but to tend, in the manner
this here body has not
known.

our skins speak
of their sameness
in bark, in wrinkles

of age and of wisdom
of me and of new-born
 what my soul has not seen
 The elm of even song
and church of chestnut
religion : if listened

listened holy, without hesitation to
the unreadable root scripture
 singing through the wind
every time, a different descant

a cousin presides here
beneath the stained glass
they've turned her into an eagle
 propped the bible between the wings
 like a doorstep creaking
in converse with the pews
we call her mahogany
covet the darkness

cast away you leaves, disciples
the tune of the season changes
 a Christmas carol this way comes
soon the children will start off -
bathing amid the departed springs,
soon their lesson begins.

The Logic of the Slaughterhouse

I sink my teeth
into the torso of the deer
shiver towards the fur
her winter coat.

A rhythm belonging to my knees
skips along our spines
like a roadside child; an irksome dog

Dawn Chorus

Imagine the body
aging towards,
 Gravity

appearing to the Blackbird concert
Kestrel aria; this calamity
a canyon forms between two
furled brows, tensed temples

step forth into the temple
the open air evergreen

not, spectacular
only morning
a little dawn chorus

lone birds, catching sight of another
snatching their flight,
gladdening and rising
 falsetto Crows and muddy Swallows
 pass by your pleasantness

your red wine, blue flesh
not as we'd have thought
no Hitchcock, no zoo.
nothing so new
 Just dawn chorus,
 air crafts awakening
 turret top guards

and you've long since forgotten
how weightless, this Gravity.

Octopus Ink

I wonder if there are
books lost at sea

 If
there are schools of fish
 reading, I wonder
why the ink doesn't slip away
why it holds on
to the life raft amid the salt water

I wonder if crustaceans
direct traffic
If whales were witness to Poseidon
read the floating chronicles
and never considered

 Walking

I wonder if there are books lost at sea
If the fish they're neighbours
If they carry on, swimming