

sweet red sounds

by

Julia Jane Sweet

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Program of Study Committee:
Debra Marquart, Major Professor
Jane Davis
Teresa Paschke

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Julia Jane Sweet

has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

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I. Salt

Evening

Daylight has settled like dust
on the windowsill
when you sit beside me on
the bed.

Tonight the moonlight is
slurring with orange
as it glistens against the
glass panes.

In our hands we find ourselves,
skin, sweat, and the roughness
of your cheeks.

When I close my eyes,
I see your face

Pale, cold,
behind my lips.

Arts

We make something beautiful
our own,
teeth scraping skin like
carpenter's files.

But in dreaming, I am cold
behind weeping walls
and I wake to find myself
too warm beside you

These dreams leave me
breathless
craving the separation.

If you knew what I did
while you slept
you would not smile
at me the way you do
through the steam of your
coffee and

the mornings you spend
making love to
empty space.

Charlie

Your voice is strange.
The world beyond God
Blooms with compassion
When you speak,
Choking whispers
Taste genuine like
Anger and death
Catching on your teeth.

I lie too often,
Alone and to you.
Rain and taxes
Cover the desk
Where I once waited naked.

Testing Monogamy

Trembling on my lips
like so many bitten tongues
more words draw the color
into my cheeks.

After waiting for so long

You are what you wish
for me for you to be.
What I never wanted to become.

Coming home at noon to empty beds,
scraps of letters I never finished
and couldn't send.

The hopes that we have become
Do not become us.

afterthoughts

the stars gaze down
on the sea of darkness
on your mouth opening
and closing on
my eyes that know
listening
is speaking is to stop

but knowing how
I love the way the words
float from your lips
like foam on this ocean

the words that say less
than your eyes
when they do not meet mine
when they do
you do not do what you

your eyes that try to see me
the way I see you
and the future that
the stars await

all the words prematurely
spoken with hands
that never grasp
the moment that was perfect

except for me

Buddha Means Enlightened One

The color of my eyes
is the blue of dawn
that silences the mourning doves
falling to night

Your voice is the sound
of the birds that I can only hear
when I breathe in

The smell of my hands
is the quiet admission
of guilt that innocence carries
in its mouth

All the people that I never
wanted to become
fade to mirages
on the interstate

You turn to face
the last of the leather-faced
cowboys

And draw

Garden

When I have chipped my paint away like dust,
You'll see where all my skin has gone to hide.
My hands and mouth just sleep and creak with rust
Since life has passed the skies where stars once sighed.
The gate has grown too large, I need her here
To see what gardens hide within her hands
While I surround my flowers, deep and near;
Like gardens I once loved to fill with sand.
My eyes are chalk and you the sun that falls
To wash my fence away and take my hope
To not be one that is to stand in walls
That fall away in wood, discarded rope
And clay. I'm not a garden, nothing here.
I am the wood which blisters opal tears.

I Am Always Forgetting You

I christened my boats with water
so I could drink to you again.

Another toast, another toast,
to forgetting you again and again.

This is how it came to this,
all my anger like a whisper.

This is how the world is seen by ghosts.
I am still forgetting you.

Blink

The light surrounding you,
glossed with pain and old demands.

Your throat, still rough where
your tongue cut deep.

In the light, the green truth
Glints in burnished gold.

Your dangerous eyes,
bitter almonds, apple seeds.

Angry wounds that could open
again like yawns.

My eyes that can turn
water into winter.

The tears and scratches
I left on your memory.

Snow

When you left, the world ceased to sing.
Though the icicles melted into slush,
The winter did not give way to spring.

I watched birds shake frost off their wings
In the sunset's earliest blush.
When you left, the world ceased to sing.

I sometimes wonder what we were doing
When we lay together, faces all flushed.
The winter did not give way to spring.

I came home that day, somehow knowing
You'd be gone; the garden was hushed.
When you left, the world ceased to sing.

I read it all and still can't help but asking
Why I allowed it, taking my trust.
When you left, the world ceased to sing
The winter did not give way to spring.

Regret

It smelled like mango chutney the night my father died.
I remember you smiling at me in the light from the
refrigerator as you pulled from the door a bottle of
orange juice. My mother used to tell me that she and
my father used to dance late at night, me, the infant,
pressed between their chests.

Tell me how to make your eyes wide and round. Let me write
our children, line by line, make them with the faces I've seen.
Their hands and footsteps already count my heartbeats as they run
down the hallway, like the *I love you's* that I've wanted back
since they've left my lips.

II. Wine

Graceland

jars of silence
gather dust and nails
on their shelves
behind the dirt and jam
pickles and plums

we you me
musty walls
preserve our worlds
as we alone collide
discovering again how
bodies smell and
the taste of sweat
mingling with lips

you led me here
our backs to the sun
following your heart

forgetting to remember
that shadows sometimes
give bad advice

Cherry Branches

The things we do behind the mask
Of drunkenness
The silence lost in words
And the words that thrive in silence
Are a mouthful of petals
The laughter still spreading across my tongue
Like chains of madness
In my nervous mouth

Like the serial lovers
and compulsive desire
That were my orbit for so long
The crumpled slices of pearl
Smother me passively

The best of times are stolen
while I sleep
Wants wasted in dreaming
the wind in branches
that touches me where I sit

as the blossoms
Touch my eyes
Like sand on the wind

Pomegranates Stained My Lips (and I Wished for You)

I remember where we were when
I knew I'd let you slip away.
Dust flooded the air behind the car, twisting away
like sheets.

I was watching the birds sing
when you walked by,
angry as ever, full of sad things.
You never told me what they were.

When everything catches the light,
the air goes dark, like birds blotting out the sun.
We were so bright,
I lost sight of everything.

Shirts and flags hang in my closet,
my carpet hangs beneath my shoes.
They are empty ears, tongues
yawning for the pleasure of it.

Like smoke stained the wall after the fire,
I wanted us to burn.

Quinine

You wake in a forest of legs
And broken books,
Sitting among the damned,
Singing through the summer of the dead.

Dark falls and the sounds around you
Are getting more and more
Desperate.

Voices twist and stretch,
Writhing in the medicinal fog
That winds through heavy limbs
And drifting leaves.

Fruit from the lime trees rots
Beneath their backs
As they lay fading
In the rattling drunkenness
Of drifting away.

Your Sickness

Until you can call it beautiful,
you let it fester.

The fermentation of love—
you reek of its decay.

Love is the Poet's disease.
I can smell it digesting you.

You vomit your love across the tabletop,
Smearing it onto sheets of paper,

So you can show me, tell me
How sick you've become of me.

Spaghetti

It must have been something I ate.

You.

You and your superlative spaghetti,
Basilled to perfection,
The tomato still firm, scarcely warmed
Through...

Through, we were through until you
Invited me to talk things over
What went wrong,
Not how to make things right.

Not to not make it through
Our first serving.

Not to be back on that couch
Kissing that same kiss,
Caressing the same corners...

Damn you and your superlative
Spaghetti

Your Italian aphrodisiacs
Love without the wine.

Threadbare

Films chirp like lantern light
Flash clips of blue pornography
On the peeling walls of this hotel
Smiles betraying intentions

We break the seal on cheap vodka
And wait for judgement to dissolve
Before we can remember where
We are

The bed creaks under your back
The floor moans when I
Lean against the wall.

I study you, lying there, while
All along your body, I can see
The hairs standing up, one by the one.

You only watch the ceiling,
Afraid that I would see
Your face on me. Ice cracks in
My hand as frozen cells give
Way.

We are the cells that
Hold on, refusing to let go of what
We know is right.

Falling Too Soon

Drinking the red wind
That winds through your fingers
The footprints written in smoke
The drops of dusk
Rising into night
Scarcely aware

Of the stars that reflect the ocean
That reflects the stars that reflect
Themselves

I descend

The Yellows of Spring

I smell you dying when the rhododendrons bloom.
They bring night wandering to me, purple swallowing
the last of sunset. Far away, hollow hills clink like tin
cups full of coins and amber in my hand. Cold things
touch my mouth and wind themselves like rings around
my cheeks. My lovers are wrapped in string and paper,
locked in drawers in my room. Wind traces my mouth,
twisting my hair into sheets of rain. I sink in memories,
drown in their oil and handfuls of salt, forget the wheat
that blew through last year, the thunder keeping time.

For That Still Morning

Like snow on the ocean, all my love. Wasted.
I've braided myself into the coils of a clock,
where I click softly like water dripping.
I will burn in your hands while shadows swirl
around your body, silver smoke and wine.

There are butterflies on the ocean,
swarming over the waves,
smothering the water,
a garden's carpet of petals.
You never see the way your eyes
turn gray when they turn to mine.

The sea froze thinly with frost
for half a day, yellow with a soft
sheen of sunlight
and I touched you with my fingertip.

III. Blood

White Scythe Smile

Her name her name her name
and yours
Sugar and death dance in
my mouth
On my tongue
Ticking ticking ticking

I have watched you
For so long
I have forgotten the color
My tangle of hair has become

My ribs gnarl around my chest
Around the little
Wet
Sacks
That keep me alive
With their
Ticking ticking ticking

In your arms the blood runs
Like a train
Her name her name her name
Your teeth snap
When you speak,
Always her name

My mind my mind my mind

Is whet

Like pretty blue

Eyes

And clicks and ticks

Like stones

I smile at her my

White scythe smile

Until the ticking ticking ticking

Stops.

Portraits

You think I am water
Fluid flaws and bone.

I am nothing more than
What my memory will bring

To the face of someone
I never saw watching me.

You are the silk that writes songs
On silk and laughter.

You make the walls bleed
Like papercuts.

Your Daughter

Whenever I hear your name, I feel like I'm dying.
I am. My blood goes heavier and bluer with every step.
A glass slips through my fingers and shatters,
The light is cracked like eggshells and neon.
Crimson stars appear on my fingertips
Then drip onto the linoleum with a hushed raining sound.
I rest my palm in the shards.
The drips fall before my eyes. They are like our child,
Wiped away before you ever could know she was there.

The Cement Garden

the towers
rise, oaks in the sea of
heads that bow

the stricken angels
writhe away from god
to the corners of the canvas

to the reality of paint on museum walls
fingerprints scrawled between
monet and van gogh

on the world's pointillism
the chain-link fences us in

in the black fog of metropolitan
coaches
the yin and the yang of tomorrow's
friends

razors and needles that give
the comfort of pain
that the drugs rub away

like blood confused
for graffiti
cloaking the caves

beneath the towers
where a million amoebas
live, die, fornicate,
beneath invisible thumbs
and absentminded eyes

never bother to see
the unhappy demons
try to escape

dig tunnels that will
collapse into graves
like legacies ending before lives

trees falling into silence
in the breathless
noosed men worship
the towers

never seeing
the bones that made
their temples

Villanelle- Et ça c'est pourquoi

Je t'aimerai au bout de ma vie
 Je te dis, sans peur, dans mes rêves
 Soyons ensemble au bout d'aujourd'hui

Il me faut toi, les nuits longues, je crie
 Et je vole chaque moment, comme ils sont breves
 Parce que je t'aimerai au bout de ma vie

Mes yeux te regarde, je pense c'est comme si
 Ça me fera du mal à les enleve-
 -R pour même qu'un instant d'aujourd'hui

Je suis tout honnête, voilà ce que je dis
 Sinon, tu sais que tu m'achève
 Il faut que je t'aime au bout de ta vie.

Tu devrais voir notre chimie
 Sinon mon coeur sera hêve
 S'il te plait, restes avec moi aujourd'hui.

Et ça c'est pourquoi je fait des chichis
 Et pourquoi je me sense comme ma peau s'enleve
 Je t'aimerai au bout de ma vie
 Parce que chaque jour je dis, "Je t'aime aujourd'hui."

Villanelle- And that is why

I will love you until the end of my life
I tell you, without fear, in my dreams,
“Let us be together all of today.”

“I need you”, long nights, I scream
And I steal each moment, how they are short
Because I will love you until the end of my life

My eyes watch you, I think it is like
It will hurt me to take them off of you
For even a second of today.

I am completely honest, here is what I say
If not, you know that you finish me off
I must love you until the end of your life

You must see our chemistry
If no, my heart will be gaunt
Please, stay with me today

And that is why I'm making a fuss
And why I feel like my skin is removing itself
I will love you until the end of my life
Because each day I say, “I love you today.”

Villanelle- Le coeur qui pousse

L'amour est une angoisse profondément dans mon coeur.

Quand je te vois, je vois un homme ardent

J'aime comment je me sens, mais j'ai peur.

Quand je suis avec toi, nous sommes le bonheur

Je t'adore et nos jours ensemble passent heureusement

L'amour est la douleur qui est dans mon coeur.

Je te veux tenir jusqu'à que je meurs

Je t'aime plus que l'or et l'argent

J'aime le sentiment, au même temps, j'ai peur.

Ma vie, elle ouverte comme une belle fleur

Du petit bourgeon du quand j'étais seulement.

L'amour, il habite profondément dans mon coeur.

Je me sens si bonne, les nuits sont le bonheur

Sous les étoiles qui danse comme l'eau d'argent,

Je me sens comme une reine, mais mon Dieu, j'ai peur

Tu deviens mon homme-consolateur

Et je deviens une fille qui aime joyeusement

L'amour est une chose, je t'ens dans mon coeur

Quand tu me t'ens, je ne peut pas avoir peur.

Villanelle- The heart that blooms

Love is an agony, deep in my heart.
When I see you, I see a fiery man.
I love how I feel, but I am afraid.

When I am with you, we are happiness.
I adore you and our days together pass happily.
Love is the pain that is in my heart.

I want to hold you until I die
I love you more than gold and silver
I love the feeling, at the same time, I am afraid.

My life opens like a beautiful flower
From the tiny bud from when I was alone.
Love lives deep in my heart.

I feel so good, the nights are happiness
Beneath the stars that dance like silver water
I feel like a queen, but my God, I'm afraid.

You become my consoling man
I become a girl that loves happily
Love is something I hold in my heart
When you hold me, I can't be afraid.

Eating Baby

Wife finds

her in the freezer like any other bird. It is not until she is home that she realizes this tiny thing is a baby. It is curled into itself like an embryo, elbows tight against its body, legs, tucked against one another.

She watches

Baby thaw, slowly unfurling, limbs drooping away from body. She reaches into its chest, Removes tiny organs, lines them up on the countertop to count. Stomach, liver, lungs.

She rubs

Baby's body with oil, rubs salt, pepper, and rosemary into its flesh and places it on in the roasting pan with onions, potatoes, Carrots, half a glass of white wine.

She washes

the dishes, sets the table, lights the candles, puts on gold earrings. She makes a salad of endives and apples and puts on more dark lipstick in the dim hallway.

Husband comes

home, takes off his coat and shoes and kisses her, wants dinner. At the table, Wife watches Husband cut Baby from the bones, chew, swallow, take a sip of wine. He talks about weather, traffic, the price of oil.

Humors

Dissolving on your tongue, my words drip down
Beneath your chin, like herbal tea that spills
Over your trembling lips that softly frown.
And I am quick to take and eat what chills
Your mind and thickens blood-- that beats-- to stone.
Because I said a name you think I lied.
I'll swear again until I'm sure it's known
I only said the name to live and thrive.
I'd never do a thing to ruin you,
Now look into my eyes and say you think
I was untrue, and tell me what you knew
That made you leave the promise wrote in ink
A mem'ry far behind. The words you said
Into my ear seem drowning in my head.

The Five Principles of Wrath

The misunderstanding.

The fear (our only

Natural predator).

The anger and isolation.

The humanity.

You shouted so loudly

When you threw the

Glass against the wall

I could almost imagine that

I didn't hear it shatter

You threw it so hard I almost

Didn't move away.

The shards are still

Embedded

In the sky

You think that if

You didn't love me

Didn't know me,

Things would be better.

I wonder

Would you still

Have thrown

The glass.

Bitter

You left me

But I am still with you

If but a shadow down the hall—

Or closer—

A feather in your pillow.

Be careful what you taste,

For my kiss is still there

And soon, you will taste me

(Like Wednesday last November).

But instead of drifting away

On your breath,

I will creep down

Your throat

Down your spine

The itch that you can't scratch

And she will never taste the same.

IV. Honey

In the City

Morning birds who love evening birds
Nest only with the night.
I didn't wake you when I left.
You told me you could not sleep unless
I was beside you.
I know you meant until.

Copper pots wait to be scoured in the sink,
Sacred as our wedding vows.
In the alley, frogs sing beneath city-stained clouds,
Air sweet with the death-smells of fall—
The smoke that hangs at the edge of every day,
The mustiness of another year gone stale.

I kept your letters in a drawer.
They smell softly of sugar and lavender,
Remind me I have been loved.
I carry them with me tonight.
I peel them and pull them into strips.
On the first gust of frosty air, I let them drift away.
Walking home, I hear the scratching of paper.
I turn, looking for your words to be crawling after me.
It is a crumpled grocery bag.

How sweet,
 how sweet,
 how sweet.
I laugh so hard I weep.

Icarus Desire

My lovers tied in golden rope and shame,
Like broken birds that try to fly, have failed
To know what bones I dried in winds that wailed
Beneath my eaves. The thoughts you sent to frame
My face, like tendrils sweet of hair, did not
Surround my past, as you, I think, had hoped.
Instead, like rain, they left me cold and soaked.
As sure as bones have cracked, my smile you sought
In vain. My lips will part for only one
To whom I owe a kiss. That he may find
Me here one day, I'll know only with time.
Perhaps he'll bring me flowers with the sun,
Or it may be that he shall never come
To wake the sleeping lust that left me numb.

Honey's Life

Remember it as sweet, when night was fresh;
The salt of skin in water's heavy warmth,
The oiled edge of steel embracing flesh.
You bled like seaweed into water's arms.
How would you look, but after drops and buds,
Were I who morning brought to find you here?
I'd see your whitened flesh in watered blood,
A tub of violet brown carnation clouds.
But bleeding fences into water's hair,
You found that you forgot to rise above
And cherish, relish what you want to tear
So you could swallow what it is you loved.
A life is pain and pleasure wrapped in skin,
The movement, bodies, people we live in.

Crayons

Who knows why
The rows of sharp, smooth
Color
Are so inviting?
Row by row
In an order
That will be abandoned for
A heap on the floor
The crayons that drew out
So many houses
So many mothers and
Fathers.

Angry wrappers tear
In the sharpener
Cerulean and meadow
Snap

Flesh is scratched waxy
On teeth
Between lips that tremble.

Daisies

Like freckles of laughter, they dot the grass.
Madeline has been picking them all day.
She makes chains for us. One for me,
One for you. Me. You. Me. You.
They hang around our ears like fog,
Asking "why?" I can scarcely bear to look
At you looking at me. You look so tired.
Tired of the grass. Tired of daisies. Tired of us.
We are strawberry patches full of birds
And empty of fruit; the sweetness
Peck, peck, pecked away.

Losing You

We counted days like
The quarters we save
For the milk man, left
In the tin box
On the porch
Where we drank
Lemonade and cicada
Songs when it was
Too hot to read.

Now you are silk and
Infirmities.
I watch you fade
Like summer.
Sugar and death,
The grasses shake.

Pantoum

I want to breathe the air from your lungs.
 Please, spend your life with me,
 Counting out our days like buttons
 And seeking out things to see.

Please, spend your life with me,
 I want to spend my days touching time
 And seeking out things to see.
 Will you come with me, as mine?

I want to spend my days touching time,
 Not biding it, not waiting to be found.
 Will you come with me, as mine?
 Our love will be ribbons of sound .

Not biding it, not waiting to be found,
 We'll speak by tasting tongues;
 Our love will be ribbons of sound.
 We can climb heaven's thousand rungs

We'll speak by tasting tongues,
 Guide with words what you cannot see,
 We can climb heaven's thousand rungs,
 Then heaven's fire we will be.

Guide with words what you cannot see,
 Tell me how to make your eyes shine
 Then heaven's fire we will be,

I'll write our children, line by line.

Tell me how to make your eyes shine,
To open them wide and round,
I'll write our children, line by line,
Build them with the faces I've found.

To open them wide and round,
I want to breathe the air from your lungs
Build them with the faces I've found,
Counting our days out like buttons.

Honeymoon

I slip between the sheets
wearing nothing
but your name

Between

You tell me to sit on the edge of your bed.
You tell me to sit on the edge of your bed.
You tell me to say nothing, to do nothing.
Tell me to say nothing, to do nothing.
Do tell me to edge to your bed, to sit.
You tell me of nothing, you say the nothing on.

Yes, put your tongue between my teeth
Yes, put your tongue between my teeth
Run your mouth down my spine
Run your mouth down my spine
Yes, run between my mouth, your teeth.
Put your tongue down my spine.

Twist my skin in your hand like hair
Twist my skin in your hand like hair
Press of your palm against my calf, yes.
Press of your palm against my calf, yes.
Palm in my hair, of your hand, like my calf
Twist press against yes your skin

Sit between my calf, your bed,
Put the edge of your teeth to my skin,
Your hand your tongue run down on in to my nothing,
You do like your nothing.
Hand against palm, hair in mouth, twist of my spine, press.
Tell me yes, you say. Tell me yes.

The Color of a Lover

Sweet cigar perfume
drips like pearls from my mouth.

Perhaps I could tell you
why the sun turns red at the horizon

I could paint the ocean
though it always moves like a smile

If I was anyone else,
anything else.

I came from the teeth of a peach, grazing
the grass where it lay to soften to nothing.

I am the color of a lover, crushed
between the pages of a book, set away.

V. Ethers

Cigarettes

Smoke curls to the ceiling
as ash drops to the table.
Your hands, holding mine,
do not brush it away.
We are as oil and water.
The air is damp with summer
and we moisten it further
with our whispers.
Your sweat, lover's icing,
beads on your back.
The smoke curls from
your mouth.
Do not brush it away.

God is Sleeping

Everything is smaller than it was
Ten years ago,
Though the world has expanded.
Rainbows still bend as easily
As steel in the strong man's teeth.
But there is a sky.

God is sleeping.
When he snores, the wind blows.
Buddhism is an umbrella.
The collapsible 8 fold path,
no match for fire and brimstone.

I am a child again, foolishly
Afraid of nightmares
That I haven't had,
afraid of horses
And two-wheeled bicycles.

Float

Falling like whistles and leaves in the wind
We try to reach the sky as it swirls downward
Into the ocean's rocking.

Our fingers brush the light
Like lips and eyelids between whispers
In the dark.

We can slip away into cold silence
Like birds leaving the eaves a winter morning
And seeds sleeping in the dirt

But we unfurl our hands upward
As though we could perhaps catch a feather
And float away.

Dust

While you sit there, watching us
from so far away, I am not
thinking of you. I am hiding
in the dirt.

The dead around tell me
how brave I am
and you ask if I am well.

They speak like you
hear- nothing of this
nor that, nor themselves.

Stories came to conclusion in
sweet red sounds
today.

I did not know them.

Lucid

Tomorrow hangs from a sky thick with clouds.

His white feet dip into the waves,
making the water lap at our island.

The sunset rolls across the water
as grasses sway like sand in the wind.

The last bits of light sting my eyes
and I blink into dusk.

I step across the sand and onto the sagging porch,
catching my toe on a loose nail.

I do not bleed.

My feet warm the floor- briefly, like pats of butter-
as I walk through the kitchen. The sun is still leaving its long gash
across the sky when I run my fingers over the wall,
tainting it with the near-imperceptible stains of the day.

My fish stares at out me from her globe
and I think I see her wink. It isn't the first time.

Half the world dreams in their beds,
but I have not slept since March.
Another red X on the calendar,
another day ends without having started,
another night begins
and tomorrow, I will again walk without waking.

The Jeweled Grotto

Rorschach's spots laugh at me and say,
"Hello! We are cats! Can't you see? Cats!"
Ink gleams like diamonds and hisses like saints.
The jeweled grotto melts in the sun.

You've drowned. Jars of water fall from the sky.
I'm still not afraid of the ocean. South of blue
Jersey, silver quicksand sinks the sky, burying
Girls and marigolds. My steps fall angular
And smeared like watercolor in the sand.

You speak with a hand as heavy as wooden pearls
And the wings on birds. Our quiet conversations
Hang in the room like photographs on fishhooks.

How did we ever get to this place? Twelve monks
And all their grace; chanting, chanting past the sea
Their droning sounds crawl back to me.

When God Swallowed Greece, I Lost My Taste For Sleep

She came to me through frowning reedsongs, drowsy and moist, the
embers in my fire. I wiped sand and pearls from my eyes as I rose
from the carpet. the trees bent over me, teetering on collapse,
like the seven days of creation. There are other things we know

without asking, but I will find them all the same,
a hundred jesters, hanging on the wall.

People for a king fall through the clouds,
waiting for evening to bleach the west gold.

The violets laugh and laugh, blue in the garden,
laughing from their yellow throats.

The Snow of 1912 Nearly Drowned Marlboro, Vermont

Though the sun now stings my eyes, the well is not dry.
But your kiss gathers lint in my pocket, folded in addresses and wrappers.

You waved at me until I was gone. When I close my eyes, I still see
your face. You closed your at my reflection that smiled like wet
diamonds, blooming like water and light.

Ten angels sit on my fingertips, Columbia's rivers ebbing away from
the seams of my palm that run like fences across my hands.

It is rawness and law that make water and ice lighter than air,
rawness and law that made me eat my jealousy, build a Rome
of gold to get lost in when you were gone.

I breathed ice into the air so I could watch the birds shake it
from their wings as I shook powder on my breasts before sunrise.

Outside, the wind was perfect;
perfect in the trees.