

If the only way to feel free is to give it all away (or eight ways to wait for rain)

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A weed ignored, it only grows

bigger, but to pluck out the wildest,

the most inopportune,

the most resilient flowers

such a painful uprooting

Besides, the seeds are already scattered

--the wind knows best

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Mourning dove, how do I know you? Because you sing,

because each morning, you teach me

how to greet the dawn, how to grieve the dying

What is the truth that birds know?

The shaded nest? The mother's crop milk?

Each parent's protection a small consolation

for the inevitability of flight?

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Maybe once you thought that only through sex

could you really reach across the darkness of isolation

to touch another person

But now maybe you realize that what you seek is words,

although not so much what is said

but the space between, the place where you say

what you mean,

less carefully but more honestly. Maybe now you think that

affection is not shown in the touch itself

but in the quiet anticipation

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The hummingbird at rest

alone on the Japanese maple's branch--

I am nervous in the spring

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What hubris it is to think that we can do a single thing

to keep a person alive through the night,

that what our minds create could overcome

chemistry, biology, all the things

we have barely begun to understand—even the weather

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When the sun is bright enough, every bird's a blackbird,

every vision backlit

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Each day is the same, and new,

we fail the same way, predictably

But it takes only one moment of success, or trust

to know the wind is enough

As the bright afternoon warms your feathers

and you fly.

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Maybe for an instant, with a shock, a ripple,

we can know another

But mostly, I know

as much as I look to the skies, as much as I look to the birds,

to the rain, to the trees, this emotion is mine alone—

Nature only reflects the certain knowledge that one day I will no longer exist.

That if I'm lucky, one day I'll be the bird's nest,

The dull mud's pull on a child's shoe—that my body will be air or dust,

everywhere or nowhere. But my emotions, any small spark

I was throughout this life, the most I can hope is that I will

return as sunlight.

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The most I can hope is that the rain will cleanse

and not erode, that after the storm comes summer.