

Poems

Rose Flint

Prayer at the Equinox

*Now the mists
hang between the day and night
veiling the edges
that divide the world.*

Oh Mother of Earth
in this time and season
everything that breathes
hangs in the balance –
neither shadow
nor radiance
are clear cut
both are charged
with the shifting perceptions
of our fears.

Mother of Earth, grant
that we see
how these mists are messengers
of truth and not illusion.

Grant that we find the courage
to step into the mystery
however far or frail
we think the unseen ground.
Grant that we trust
the places in-between
that bridge our differences
and unite us all
in one world
hanging in the balance
at this time.



Hunting Silence

The hunters have set lime on every branch,
put nets of mist across the evening sky
so birds that wheel the world each year and dance
the sun around, will pause to rest, and die.
The Wind is keening loss. He has no freight,
no featherweight to carry home to groves
where nightingales would wake him, sleeping late,
or larks rise singing praise to vine and rose.
The birds will turn to Wind and sigh his name:
Wing! Go! Their songs are stone, their tongues are dry,
they fall from breath: each death a little game;
each singing heart is pinned and cannot fly .
The land lies shocked, brutalised by silence:
the loss of song itself, immense violence.

Note: In Cyprus, limed sticks, mist-nets and semi-automatic rifles are used to illegally hunt an estimated 20 million migrating birds each Autumn.

From *Mother of Pearl*, PSAvalon

Running on Empty

I ran from my Mother before I was born
(and she'd tried so hard, made me of star-ash, clay, rain)
but I raced downtown and went chasing the easy speedy
routes over fields of fuel (feet dirty, heart hungry)
trawling the wide mouth of my Fendi sack for spoils,
discarding and trading: *uranium, copper and cotton,*
bodies and palm oil, sugar, coffee, coal futures, gold –

Someplace I spilled babies, somewhere I drew crowds,
but I rushed on faster, eating and spitting out riches,
winding higher and higher through wasteland and mountain
until I reached the edge and stopped - with nothing before me.

Sirocco and shadow have formed the last of my family:
Grandmother Earth, stick-thin and bony, so fragile, so
easily broken; scorched, hairless, dry breasted, abraded -
Only the two of us matter, only us in existence.

I could leave her. Go on running on empty –
or take off my Prada jacket and wrap it around her,
set tinder to flame in my shoes and sit at her feet, listening
to Wisdom: the First voice of Spirit, breath of the future.

From *Mother of Pearl*, PSAvalon

Wearing the Four-Quartered Skin Of The Elements

As if a salamander shucked off its brilliance
or a phoenix, still glazed with albumen, birthed
through this saltwood fire, heat haze
ripples serpentine stones into water,
fusing four elements, making a fifth sacred thing
visible in shine: a spirit-skin, flexing,
stretching out its pinions, its plumage of gloss.

Do I know the spell that allows me to step out
of the sand that surrounds me
and walk into that place of intense heat
and transparency? Sand blows into my eyes
so I cry out blindly, but if I could slide
the four quartered skin of the elements
over myself like a membrane of light,
I'd become clear, meniscus of crystal,
far-sighted each way.

Fire would seal me into that spirit-skin,
hissing and steaming - it would feel like a coat
of rippled cellophane electric as liquid quartz.
Air would breathe me up into its global dervish,
Water would swallow me - I fish-silvered, mirrored,
drinking in wisdom under the ninth wave. Earth
would rock me, root me deep so I could learn
the web of the world's patterns and know
in my own body the distortions we've made
in the balanced fabric of things
as we stumble myopically in and out of life.

And I'd go where the elements go in their dreaming.
I'd follow migrations of weather and seasons,
ride the mirage and the ice, glide down the steep face
of a woman's tears into the cave of questions
where the world's answers sit in the four directions
patient as tourmaline, or the future

Author: Flint, Rose; Title: Poems

that's still not chosen. They are waiting
for someone to come seeking their saving grace;
they have all the time in the world, as we have.

Let me be brave enough to step into that place
of heat and transparency and be seen: caring,
wearing the world's living skin on my sleeve.

From *Firesigns*, Poetry Salzburg

© Rose Flint