





In the hall of iced cedars, it seems possible  
to forget the spring. Forgotten: the lilac bush  
that leans over the water, a *widow maker*.

Forgotten: honeysuckles that carry on  
with their wafting, the dew I received  
as a blessing.

Spring is only a spasm—  
before long, the weeping cherry's hem of petals  
fallen to nourish the earth.  
Winter endures, the crystal casket  
it grows around the world.



There—a gunshot, just a disturbance  
through the trees—far off, an uncertain kill.  
How awful, death relived at its slightest suggestion:  
the trail a smooth passing, but then  
the fallen animal.

A corpse is a corpse,  
that way I did not see him—cold,  
and colder. I've become  
the one to cry *adore me*  
in the direction of all there is,  
the nearest flock startled into separate explosions.  
It is always the birds who fall back together, freely  
leaving the silence to roost.



How long have I followed tracks without realizing  
everything stalks all else?

Animals, exposed, don't know  
harmlessness. This land without mercy.  
This whipping drift so dense  
it may as well be the blizzard that blew me here.  
There are kingdoms under snowpack, tunnels  
unseen unless destroyed.



The knot of mice  
breathes heat into the haven. A fox  
listens for prey before tearing into the snow.



Winter rain arrives, pocks snowbanks, exposes  
deer tracks, their piss. The holes left by hooves  
are deep, flooded with bog water, its frozen mosses.  
The river high and fast. Dead grasses,  
cedar fronds dipped into water like wicks into wax—  
bright bulbs of ice

I want to shatter. How much  
of enjoying a place is destroying it? Marks made,  
however unlasting, lasting. I've killed a creature  
to see if I could. I can't tame myself.  
Or won't. I flick snow from my jean cuff.  
I could stuff a songbird into my mouth.



Once, I found a finch's skeleton still  
hanging from a glue trap. The dead  
do not speak—to me  
they've said all they can. Hours spent  
ashamed, attempting. What will be possible  
when I'm no longer sorry? I can want  
until I'm blue. Blue dark cast on snow, the burn  
of fingers coming, once again,  
alive.

In this mind, I may trudge  
toward the ravine of forgetting—  
a stampede of velvet horses,  
a dream too new to burn.



Forgotten: the giddy  
sunflower field, the frog spared  
beside the river. Encased in winter,



all too clear: a gasping body glows,  
a moon sinks on the end of a wire.  
I've come a long way  
to do my goodbyeing.

What will it look like?  
How much will it weigh?



During grey days, I grew  
more afraid. I feared even the fear,  
the staying afraid.

Why is it gloom  
produces the most angelic light,  
days cast as more precious  
in shades of platinum, the branches  
locking horns again, birch skin silver  
as scrim? More awful still to find  
this way of being is bearable, if only that.  
In our old garden, autumn stalks  
of daffodils may remain,  
braided before their decay,  
under the freeze. Imagine  
all the long-awaited releases.



Movement in the thaw. Warmth  
of movement without touch. There: a deer gone still  
beside the river. The iridescent eyes. The moment  
before she leaves me. Light snags  
in the rain, threads of light. I hear lightning  
can spring from heat alone. But not here,  
in the land of aurora, blush of green  
across the cloudless sky.  
What follows?

Sweet water  
flowing down the bend. Sweetness made  
bitter by its passing. Made sweeter. Made. All of this  
made. A path long eroded made longer.