



sample poems from

## *Translations From The Human Language*

### *Thirst*

This year I've felt the push of antlers  
thrusting out of my head.  
I've leaned my head many times toward the grass, stretching  
my neck to drink. This year  
I've awoken from the catacombs of sleep,  
my cheeks wet with spring water,  
my heart beating like a river  
sprung from rock.

### *Woman With Book*

1

In a yellow frame hangs the face of a man,  
a profile with sensitive lips  
she might kiss.  
She is posing in long, sensual curves.  
One arm bends like a palm tree  
her head leans against.  
Ah! She is reading.  
But see how the book has fallen  
open into her lap.  
He is thinking about her round breasts,  
the curve of her belly.  
He places his hand along her folds  
and opens her.  
She tilts back her head,  
lowers her eyelids.  
Her mouth a red berry.  
Her nipples two red berries.  
The man in the yellow frame  
is blank and abstract.  
She is bound up in his obsession with curves.  
The hand in her lap, his  
heavy dark lines

2

She is posing with sensitive lips  
a profile  
  
a yellow frame  
He is thinking about bending  
  
like a palm tree  
He is thinking  
  
about the dark lines of a man  
He places his mouth  
  
along her folds  
and opens  
  
two red berries  
She is posing  
  
blank and abstract  
hands  
  
in her lap  
her folds  
  
his sensitive lips  
the heavy frame  
  
she is bound up in  
the sensual curves of a man  
  
see how the book  
hangs open  
  
the thought  
she might



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### *sometimes in the open you look up*

to see a whorl of clouds, dragging and furling  
your whole invented history. You look up  
from where you're standing, say  
among the stolid mountains,

and in that moment your life

becomes the margin  
of what matters, and solid earth

you love dizzies away from you

like the wet shoreline sucked back  
by that other eternity,

the sea. At times the spinning  
earth shrugs you off balance,  
gravity loosens its fist, hoists you into the sky,  
and you might spend your life trying to recover

this nearness to flight.

### *Light, Gravity, No Nouns*

in no hungry walking upright  
empty wingless ascends alongside  
a right round round right round falls brightly spherical  
arranged, arranges hollow, hollow climbs tall

lanky pushing, fingering fall  
a yelling angry and her talking and lingering  
at this eating, a swallowing down dark  
down breaking, broken splinters into listen

### *World In Need Of Braiding*

This time of year our hands reach for the ends of  
things, twist patterns out of reflected light, out of  
water, loaves of bread. We lie down on the grass  
beside those we have disappointed, dry, unfor-  
given. We are supposed to be eating, preparing to  
sleep, filling the storerooms with enough color,  
dividing the universe into light and dark. But the  
dry grass, the purple thistles, the burrs in our  
socks want our attention. They are old. They are  
dying. They need us to listen to their stories, the  
same as last year.

"Not much breath left," say the grasses, and the  
brittle gates of the hill swing open. We love this  
season of loose connections, excess of prepositions,  
the long shadows of the corn. And now the car-  
riage of darkness rides into view, bright yellow  
wheels and spokes like unfriendly laughter. Now  
the long carriage of night gathering speed.

Take us slowly down the wind-sea, this plenitude  
of death. Slowly, slowly run the last of the day-  
light, riding away the sun. We come wobbling,  
void of course, shaking in our inadequate clothes.  
We need time to lie down in the evening shadows  
we love, to stretch our heart beyond its cage of  
silence, to pull what grows, richly and abundantly,  
towards us.