



Into the success of a unified minute

Connie Monson

Seeds dark and glossy before the fruit is ripened,
the fruit before the draggled petals fall,
winter before the tree is planted, stretching
endlessly before.

Because there never was one,
a time prior or purer, the garden we made up
to explain how we got here. If spirit and matter ever
wed, it were in decay, the broken bark of cedars
birthing a dozen more, *Morchella* feasting
sweetly in the aromatic burnt corpses of trees.

For all I want to tell you is rain, and the brake of ferns
their own source of light, which breaks like a halo
around us, and nothing you *would* do could surprise
me. This is the ancient secret of saints:
the corruption of flesh in immutable, holy in its very order.

If I speak gravely, forgive me. We live
yet, struggling within our lucid skin like salamanders
with their birthright of fire. Overhead, lichen strung
dazzled with rain through the trees. Lie beside me; listen
to the soil grow deeper, find our place, take us in.



When she turns fifty

Connie Monson

it's not the bones she worries
might turn brittle and break
she listens to the slow tick
of tap and sink each drop
blossoming rust on white each
the moment she has waited

she after all never matter wholly
but music something more
and less the first articulate
thrum of cello and hush
just after what is heard then
a chord the harmonics of there

and not there she turns fifty
learns to fix the roof she learns
Dvorák not too late what love is
angels who smash crockery
against her ribcage when we say
the heart soars does it mean

this unexpected opening drawing back
a door on its squeaky hinge
drawing the bow across a rising
crescendo drawing open the curtain
resolutely closed the act itself always
an imagination of the act itself

as if she were a kind of fruit then
as if in the mind it were not
incongruous and she almost torn
like an orange carefully separated
tender ligaments ligatures coming
apart music made that tangible

to the listener who holds the fragile structure
of cello as material idea its touch there
and there against the thigh scattered waves
measurable and immeasurable but turning she
turns fifty suffused in sound now
certain the string that breaks can be mended

