

Poison Oak Poetry

Lurking

Hidden under the pear tree
That early spring
Lurking
A reckoning of mind and body.
Nature always wins.
Know your place in the world.

Tending the Garden

One way to root out hidden danger
Is to smother it.
Remove the oxygen that fuels it.
Feed it nutrients of a different sort.
Tend the garden
With an eye on any reemergence
Leap into action to pluck it out
Then return to your reclining chair
To savor the day.

Innocence

I didn't know I could still be
Innocent.
After decades of getting and giving
The excesses and sorrows
After more than twenty years of marriage
And raising three boys.
Can anything surprise me?
Yes.
The shock of vulnerability and aging.
There are always lessons to be learned.
I have been an attentive student.
And I am weary from the journey.
Must carry on.

Vessel

No one tells you what it's like
Aging
Menopause
My body served as the vessel and bedrock
For my sons and husband
And then, duties fulfilled, cracks appeared
Like veins beneath translucent skin
Giving the veneer a mottled appearance
While keeping the form intact.
Light shines through the cracks
How can you be whole
When your heart has been blown wide open?

The Meadow

Where do you go when you die?
What is that other place?
A wide meadow with sunlight and a soft breeze.
That's where I am.
Do you see me?
I am waiting for you.

Things My Older Sisters Didn't Teach Me

How to wash my delicates
The importance of good skin care
To keep a secret
To be gentle with myself and others
How to be kind to my husband
The buoy of art and faith
Skill at building a solid foundation
Of self
Because in the end, isn't that all there is?

Marriage

We move through the day
In a well-crafted choreography
Bringing in the supplies
Packing them away
Feeding the children
And taking out the trash
With an eye on making it pretty
And a passion for making it taste good
Our worlds barely connect
After twenty-eight years of marriage
If I close my eyes, I know right where you are.
In the orchard.
Standing at the sink.
In your chair sitting so quietly drinking your tea.

Boys

There is nothing like a 15-year-old boy
All scaffolding and girding
For manhood to come
Innocent and aware.
Playful and series.
Alone in the wilderness
With few tools to navigate the crossing.
My voice muffled but here, always here
Like a lighthouse.
Warning about the rocks off the shore
And reminding you of home.

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