

THE SUN WHISPERS, WAIT

Brown Turtle Poetry Series



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LORD KNOWS

lord knows honey
she said folding her hands
into the flowers of her apron
you got to make your
own road

sometime

it was her wisdom
so i waited

coming and going
aint gonna do
when you get to be
old like me just
going

aint it like
some folks to jump
on their own backs
stead of using the road
to get somewhere fools
is fools but you aint never been
one you hear

sure gonna be hard
on your mama though
but she'll do all right

now
before you go i wants to give you
a little something

to help out
and i still have it

and the dollar bill
she unfolded slowly and put
into my hand

A POEM FOR NOLA FIFE

a bouquet of ninety-five roses

Some loveliest of the roses
trace the fences of this block
long limbs of red and white and salmon pink
swollen with heated scent and dust
droop into my path
as I walk looking for surprises in the street

And I am taken
to the country summers
of days when forever came and went
by noon by supper
by fireflies
conversing in the fields and yards

At this window tonight
as I drift and nod soothed with tea
sweetened by sudden recollections
(the surprise of our still being here)
the faces and voices of some of the loveliest
of my life sway and beckon
me to sleep

I am comforted
by the roses I have touched
those that have gifted my window vase
my mind my heart

where fireflies forever
dance their signatures in light

THE ARCH : ST. LOUIS

1.

we are coming back to it
the taste of cold air edged like
a blade, bitterness slicing
our throats lancing our eyes
of salt

drawing off the heart
the last film of hope we suffered
under

the death of men
the rooting of despair in the few
(even the world is few when one
man you have known lifts his head
finally away from you

and is silent
forever)

survivors locked in trying
to understand

2.

the crying is heard whenever a shadow
resists the need for sun
the crying is felt in the muscles along
the back, the neck, the arms held ready
to lift, to hold, to take away

(even
the world, if known, is lifted when one
man is carried into the earth)

our last
link desperately clung to for difference

3.

and yet
our hearts continue beating
the icy breath gulped in anguish
feeds the blood

and allows us the strength to stumble
until we are able
to walk

4.

we are coming back to it
we are coming back to it
we are coming back

5.

the sleeping spirit surges
up like oil

6.

we are all coming
back to it
it is all coming back

7.

those who possess the city sought
to claim their right forever
and
pulled out of the earth out of
the flat land/breasted river
the
silver ribbon
to tremble in

the reflected moonlight and muddy
brown water

8.

no flags are left
from the north the river brings whispers
it is the whisper of our return
it is the shaking loose of dirt by skeletons
of the hunt

9.

for the voice of the spirit