

Three Poems in March, after Baca

by Heather Fowler

In Plural

I could love them all, your people,
Learn their differences, speak their tongues,
When there is no one there to hold you
But me, my arms would be wide enough
To hold armies of your need. Do not forget.

Forget neither how the sands of time will wrap us,
How we will age and falter and fall apart; do not
Forget this, especially, as we cling together
For dear life, in a storm, in the moment before
A narrowly averted disaster of our loss, and if,

For one moment alone, you release me, have faith
I shall return to you, shall grab you and hold you and
Twirl you and kiss you into my oblivion, unless you don't
Want me any further, unless you say so again and again,
Until I am deaf to all but that, though this would

Be all. Be quiet. I love you that way. I could
Love them all, your people: your aunts, your uncles,
Your children, and your dreams. We could dwell together
In these, make more. We are provident and powerful:
Our loves can make mockeries of sorrows,

But only if you let my people in.

~

Saying What You'd Like Me Say, When I Love You's Not Enough

I am offering this gone-girl to you
Since there is nothing more you'll take:
Keep it like the drafty door
In your childhood house, nurture
It like a venomous burr on a snake's side
The warm cannot penetrate.

I despise you.

I have nothing more to grope from this now,
Cannot grapple away that food
To fill your fragile belly,
Will not take your winter scarf, since I
Live too far and cannot use it here.

I despise you,

Keep this hate, nurse it, as you would a bitter draught
If you were warm and needing cold's revival
In the ragged forest of summer rain when nature
Might corner you to note I love you still,
Bright doubt unleashed with clouds in mourning,
When out of the dense trees, I'd come knocking,
Or historic Mes might say, "I'll give you directions,
Baby: Stand by my heat, rest in my heat, I will warm you,
I will cherish you, and make you feel so safe," but

I despise you,

Have you heard enough to believe
Me now; does this conform to the way you want to live
Without guilt and without progress inside,
When the world outside is crueler than I,
And you hate my kindness because
It breaks unwanted sweetness into truths? Remember,

I despise you.

~

Absentia Siren

I am sorry I missed your texts;
Bloodroot and vanilla knives
Colored my thinking, left at bay,
Where yester-musings were kept
As wives.

A small cat and a blood-red orange
Made love on a counter,
Rubbing cheek and peel.
Small things caused me weep.
Status quo.

Call me again tomorrow.
I will wear my listening ear.
You can wear your speaking mouth.
Let's press one to the other,
Whichever.

Together, I can try to be

Less absent. You can try
To span the bolted miles
With laughter, as I thank
Your success.

