

Cowgirl Boots

The purpleness of that flower along this lane
invokes an opinionated man - tulip too singular, peony too crass –
I mention *aquilegia* and he teases me for knowing Latin.
The common name is columbine, he says.
Columba dove from the supposed resemblance to a cluster of five doves,

relating to the family Ranunculaceae,
backward-pointing spurs for petals
– what Mrs Fife taught me when I wheeled her into her garden;
(the pushing eventually stimulated the contractions)
she greeted each flower by name

and declared earrings were tiresome and made one feel *common*.
To be spurred on need not include a spiked wheel.

(my baby was born two days later, he is not the father)
This is radical time, not linear
pieced together

We
pass these gardens where the memory originated
on my way to the swimming pool.
The lifeguard broadcasts music strange to my ears, to my crawl,
to another woman's butterfly,
communal showers and changing cubicles.

Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah

The dough is ready to roll –
a dusting of flour and there you are
on my shoulder eyeing the bowl of cherries.
It's the lattice I find tricky, weaving in and out,
thumb-pressing the edges, a brush of milk –
there's only you to hear me
Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah off key
when cherry pie's out of the oven
my oh my! this is no Disney,
more Gospel earthy sexy thanks
to the radio DJ's effort and my *satisfaction*;
I set aside a slice for you, *Mr Bluebird*.

Open hearted as a heart can be
I drift to memories of Shel (who loves Coco Rosie)
everybody just hold hands and I feel
hers in mine and we dance back in time
to our art school easels poised before us,
we painted maps by *following the stars* –

rainbow warrior, I go deeper into a forest
to listen to a thousand ravens roosting,
Shel is calling to me when my attention
is drawn to geese flying over the pines;
the geese were once human like her.

Crane

She has no idea her larynx is the hollow muscular organ
forming an air passage to her lungs

An artificial eye in a photo booth captures
her face on a strip of paper

She tears a strip of bark from the rowan tree beneath which she thinks about God
She's there she shouts

No one hears her
No one hears of her move into a cave

How she grows over a hill of darkness –
Emerges into the cold clear light of language

Burning winter lowers a tongue into her oesophagus womb prayers
When he returns to bed he finds a blackbird has replaced her

She thrusts her white pick-up truck through intense fog and stops unknowingly at a cliff-edge
In the clarity of dawn fishermen haul a shark from the undertow

The delicate clasp round the pin secures the brooch to her cardigan
The cardigan is buttoned up to her neck

The sea is still in her feet

She awaits the unborn moon in a plastic chair on a sultry night

Recalling what the astronaut said of lift-off and its unforeseen violence

Like the trachea pierces the breastbone and flying muscles

Giving her far-carrying cries and wings