I Will Take the Ram Into My Mouth

Claudia Florence Savage
CLAUDIA SAVAGE

I WILL TAKE THE RAIN INTO MY MOUTH

as if it were your skin

complicit, I can be a pleasure-bird
seeking the damp seed
the well-oiled wing
in the corner of what explodes

quickly, so as not to wake the evening

I will weave mist into my hair
as if I bore it

when I wade into the Willamette
the barren trees my bridesmaids,
the fog as coat

the fields hush
the highways

for roses to unfurl
a second time
pale, weeping figs
colored as grass
protect their flower
rosemary thickens the
wild persimmons

wash
in the muted
heavens
we sleep past the lit wood and poured tea,
   a sigh against my shoulder
holds that appled light, cinnamon in my hair
your neck exposing
its honey

when we greet the rain, you seek the soggy roots,
   the maiden hair and fir
stomped through this dark
grey lullaby of
beaten maples
triumphant spruce

the salmon are making me an optimist
   returning
giant silver fish, dinosaur fish
hook-nosed and wonder-eyed,
stronger than us
sacrificing fish, returning

a blanket of river covers the waterfall
   where they leapt 14,000 years
still it seeps, weeps,
falls under water,
falls

as berry leaves, as ivy crowds the corners
   of my head
and the city floods
and the feral ring-tailed cat I covet
doesn’t want to get her paws wet

softly, I will court the sun
   confide in the February crocus
the solution to our malaise:
   rain, rain,
down the drain, drain
the key to the Pacific Northwest is a wool hat and good jacket:
  whiskey helps
  coffee helps
  fucking helps

there is deeper quiet somewhere, when
we escape further west
the churning sea wind scoops at
my brain like butter and I'm
lost to the rocks
as foam

if I say yes to you, your city, fate, yes
will the volcanoes dream their worried dreams
the Columbia remember a time before steel
the blackberry thicket's ardor

when I fly into strange and dark
  salty grasses, nights on fire
  hidden fish glowing at the muscle
  will you follow

to a place where you can throw your lungs into that horn
  and the herbs sacrifice their young
  to a god of your making

sun after days upon nights upon days of water
I warm your mouth with my mouth

we vibrate the air
once more