

Poem for really serious things

Tom Brinck

11/21-11/22/96

her laugh
as the sandwich guy makes a joke

the warmth in my cheeks
of something almost jealousy

the light reflected in her eye

the serious way
she eats

her hair falling forward
then her eyes peacefully closed,
brushing it back behind her ear

1.

a day in the woods
she, beside a tree
flowers in the air

the way her shoulder holds a dress

the rabbit that comes to sniff her hand
as she rests in the grass
the curl of her soft fingers
as they gently caress the delicate fur

the pleasure she takes
in stretching her neck

her sleepy way of rolling in the grass

2.

when our love was still
only secret desire in our hearts

the way I hated myself for days and weeks
when I failed to hold the door for her

waiting at the library at 2pm
knowing she'd come to read the Times

the 3rd time she laughed at me:
"Are you still here?"

3.

the nights when I meet her at a corner
and we walk beside the shops
to find perhaps a meal

a bench on the sidewalk

the way we talk for hours
forgetting to eat

the way I'm lost in her eyes

and she in mine

when she steps away
for a moment
her coat over a chair
makes me feel that all is well

how close we feel
when we share our fries

the sensuality of drinking from her straw

her sheepish grin
when the woman at the table next to us
tells us she can feel
electricity in the air

her fingertip on top of mine

4.

the way she takes me shopping
and pulls my arm to steer me in a store

her keen eye for the elegant
hidden among souvenirs

the covert thrill of choosing lingerie with her
how she prods for my opinion
and I say she should try it on
and show me

her secret pleasure that I should flirt with her

the knowing look in the salesperson's eyes

5.

discovering she'd leave at summer's end

asking her to a play
a silly old romantic comedy

the night coming slowly down
along the wooded path
how we walked so slowly we almost stopped

the outdoor theatre
the nearby vineyard
the stars the breeze

too careful to preserve it all
we sat in silence

the way we sat so close
I smelled perfume

how I'd stare at her with her eyes in the stars
how she'd look back and I'd look away
how she'd stare till I looked at her again

summer's end:
she hates goodbyes

6.

the highway speeding by like in a movie
in a rental car
the autumn colors chilly wind

I drive six hours to surprise her
in the library 2pm

she isn't there

the hollow ringing of her phone

leafless trees mimic the bareness of my heart

7.

alone
at her parent's home
she watches out the window
the haphazard path of a dog grazing down the street

somewhere between the glass and the ground
her eyes play out a fantasy

somewhere from across the sky
arms come to hold her tight

the bushweeds gently rocking
as clouds fill the sky

the way lonely moments speak to you
of someone dear

the sad rising and falling of her chest

the way one hand holds the other
wishing one of them were someone else

the rain falling an early twilight

the long century of an afternoon
spent reflecting on someone far away

how she pulls her pillow close
how a tear slowly falls and slowly dries

8.

coming back, the note she finds under her door

the way she jumps when she sees that it's from me

the phone call I get saying
Tom, come back to see me one more time
I promise to be here for you

every inflection of her voice
every nuance in her expression
like dewdrops on my thirsty lips

9.

the unrelenting joy I feel at seeing her again

the rose between my nervous fingers

her smile and the helpless way she climbs into my arms

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