

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Ellen Webre: Three Poems

Ellen Webre · Monday, August 22nd, 2022

### The Budding Boy

*After the painting "Budding Boy" by Julie Heffernan*

White limbed and long, a scattering of bones and moonlight  
twined with sinew and red hair.  
He stands barefoot, naked as the tree he has grown from,  
holds the bounty he has gathered  
to his stomach: peaches, pomegranates, blackberries, and bird skulls,  
these eggshells of what he is made of.  
I find him outside my window after a night of uprooted sheets.  
He looks back like a cherry blossom  
floating away on a river of mercury. Oh, he is the salt and rice of me,  
my sighs by honeyed candleburn,  
an apple that calls with the hiss of a snake, coaxes a meeting  
of tongue and lips like prayers.  
His fingers dig into the branches, searching for steadiness, waiting  
for my mouth to swallow  
the whole of him, the nectar of his blooming, white petals  
in their unraveling.

\*

## Don't Look Down

*You head toward a life you won't be living.*

— Kim Hyesoon

The hand in your hand is already a ghost.

What you don't know keeps you running  
on air after the cliff gives way.

Confession: there is no truth that will keep  
you and your joy in the same sky.

The ghost in your hand is flickering,  
begging, drowning. Do you know?

Your joy is crying, is overwhelmed.  
Your joy is taking off his face.

Don't look down.

He is still behind you. But you do not see him.  
He is waving goodbye. But you do not turn.

You hold your hands and head toward a life  
you won't be living because all you believe in

is the indigo night of a future  
you will never get to hold. Because

your muscles are made of prayer,  
and gravity knows your worth.

\*

## Red Cento

*After Alyssa Matuchniak*

summer apples fat-bellied, by the metal  
scent of my blood, the silk nipples dark  
red, swollen sugar rubies, dotted cherry,  
browning end of harvest: reminder, of  
red-paling blossom, deepening your rich  
red linen lies, your crimson ritual of  
purity, cleansed in lipstick like blood,  
shiny and ruby dark, flicker of garnet on  
Persephone's teeth

\*



A BURNING LAKE OF PAPER SUNS by Ellen Webre

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