

Ash Davida Jane
2022

fruiting

After Nicola Farquhar

WE

wake and it's spring again
and again and again
snowdrops pock the cliff face
their heads turned down
not in
despair but in comfort
get the sun on your shoulders
the wind hasn't forgotten winter yet
but we know how it goes this awakening
we're eager for it bursting can
feel the murmurs through the earth

I

leave the house and it starts to rain
there are leaves slick in the wet
that I do not remember turned
my head for a moment
and they've been added to the landscape
the shape printed over and over
with a pattern indiscernible
covered in a sheen like oil
the others have gone into hiding but for
one blackbird and I braving the weather
I worry for her wings
sodden hair drips down the back of my neck
hard to gather oneself up
with all this extra flood
it has nowhere to go you know

YOU

want a creation myth well
it's the same as any other
light warmth wetness
so slow you wouldn't notice unless you knew
something starts to hum
to twitch
to feel
another beginning that is also an ending
each year the joy seems fresh
as if it's the first
it takes only three months for flesh to forget

the feeling of being warmed through
the shock of giving a body what it wants
at the genetic level
like giving up and giving
the sugar bowl over to the ants
live vicariously through their need
let yourself be overwhelmed by it
there are always things
you can survive without but
shouldn't have to
always people telling you to
listen to your body
but you're not sure you still speak its language
it's become harder to
distinguish the individual birdsong
the car alarms from the tuī echoing the car alarms
every ending is also a beginning

I

come downstairs to find the mushroom spores
coating the countertops like
fine sugar
wonder how much longer it'll be
before I find them fruiting
in the corners of the room fruiting
in the curves of the curtains fruiting
behind my ears
when I wake
reclaiming the space we held
for the briefest time

YOU

see signs everywhere
half an eggshell rests on the gate
baby blue and the size of a breath
the crow of a rooster deep in the suburbs
you think
it must be dawn somewhere

WE

were never gone never dead just
resting
there were days it felt
the sun would never return
but we knew she would
weeks the rain fell in swathes

and we drank it up while we could
till it was too much and
spilt out
the mushrooms balloon above
flesh porous and rot away
just as quick but their fingers thread
through the dirt and spread they whisper
to each other and we eavesdrop
share their messages with the beetles
as they arrive into being and shimmer past
they are new here or perhaps
very old either way we do not remember them
but they know us heard
our thrumming song in their past lives
while they waited in their eggs and then
felt their way into the world as larvae
eat the world
and become the world anew

I

start to rain and it leaves the house
I've never spent so much time alone
the details grow sharper
the edge of a spoon in a bowl
of tinned peaches
their sweetness against the back
of my teeth what do you do with
these luxuries you take in
the sunlight
both direct and as turned to sugar
taken on the tongue
sleep them off or rebirth them
turn them into something else
for consumption
something to offer outward
to tithe to the elements you cannot live
off yourself only
you'll eat yourself away like a fire
not a closed system but a wheel turning
soon I'll wake and it'll be spring again
and nothing will have changed
I say it like casting a spell
it'll be spring again
and nothing will have changed