

Four Poems

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A Sentence

The mother loved the son
as if infancy were eternity
come again

and so it was and then
the belovèd son
left it to go

into the grown one and so
then she was mortal again
and alone.

Without Wanting

June night. The primordial era, a few days,
when our air is a lake of lilac scent,
has just ended. The fits
of a weak breeze blowing in the screens
and through the house are clean and clear. You are
somewhere in the world right now,
as I am here, and maybe
the night is as quiet
where you are. The storm, regret, when it came
and it will come again
filled me unwilling—uselessly the useless
being can't help but cower. But now it is
calm, beauty, and hope for you, that fill me
without my wanting. They make up
the one of all life's dominations
that I desire.

The Sun

When I was a great god
driving sky-horses from the fields of dawn
and thundering silently across
day after day, and later when I was the still
much greater burning center
of all dwelling, all erring—the planets—I taught you
humility with my grandeur.
And I even gave you a sort of chastened grandeur
of your own. Now that I'm a miserable low-average star
buried in a more or less endless heap of stars
and buried still deeper with the whole heap of them
in the tar of emptiness, I teach you
mortification.

Actual Intelligence

Do you think the body lying on the street,
motionless, whether it's a woman or a corpse,
isn't talking to you? Do you think the desert,
where you don't remember
and even your great-great-grandfather didn't remember
that there were once meadows and forests here,
isn't talking to you? Do you think that the body,
the desert, aren't saying to you
a more intelligent thing than any you dare?