What I meant to do

I had intended to look at the roses today, but
The rain fell and obscured my view and the
Carpathian Mountains would keep on
Invading the garden
And a small dog, name of Ginger,
Sat on the window sill all the time the rain fell.
And my view grew narrower
And seemed further away,
And the scent of the roses, real and distant –
No longer seemed real –
And I put the roses on hold
And did not go out into the garden
In the pure beauty and haberdashery of the rain
And let the roses take me prisoner,
As I should have done.
I, who was once their captive and their slave
Let the rain and the dog and
The mountains intervene.
It is no longer enough to say –
I will keep the roses for tomorrow.
The roses have need of me, and I them.
So, you will excuse me –
If I leave you to your tomorrow.
I am taken prisoner by the roses.
And bid you, a sweet adieu.

All I Want

All I want , before the end
Is a few days in the sun.
Somewhere to catch my breath.
That's all I ask.
Perhaps, an old apple tree –
And myself to sit there
With my head on your shoulder
And to tell you that I love you.
And to know that you love me.
A simple soul.
That's all I ask – before the end.

For Phil: written 26th June 2012
– and the sun IS shining.

Moments

Life is just a series of moments.
The moment when the two of you met.
The moment when you parted.
The moment when you thought
you might just make it.
The moment when you almost gave up.
The moment when you soldiered on.
The moment when the lilac tree mam planted,
flowered – first time ever.
The moment when storm clouds of the heart were gone.
The moment when all the unknown stories
in the unknown books made sense.
The moment when the old dog died.
The moment when the new dog – just a puppy
– stared at the empty space.
The moment when the kids opened their eyes.
The moment when they opened yours.
The moment that the sun became the moon.
The moment that your love was
all that you could lean on.
The moment that you climbed the stairs,
Threw your words into the dancing stars above – and knew that all was well
And sorrow, gone.
Life is just a limbo dance under the stars
Of moments.

Visiting the Parrot

Through the window I could see the small cage,
And his shape clutching at the edges of it.
She made us tea – the woman.
I have saved him, she said, *from definite destruction*.
If it weren't for me, she said – *where would he be?*

She let him out and he climbed sideways down to have a good look at me -
Leaning a little breathless (that being the two of us)
I sensed a fellow clown, an acrobat – squawking –
Only let them see what we want them to see.
Chintz wallpaper. Earl Grey in perfect white porcelain.
And the sky outside – beckoning.
And our two hearts like defused weapons.

He went a little dizzy with the sweetness of the air
(much as I do myself on good days)
Tell me how goes it? we asked each other.
His head leaned on my shoulder before he climbed back in.
And the teacups rattled and through the window,
I swear I saw and heard the sky itself –
I could feel the two of us – clutching at the edge of it.

Visiting the Parrot

Helen Burke

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Visiting the Parrot

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