

Days Beyond Measure

Wind bounces branches
 as I climb to the highest reach
 of an apple tree and rest there
 scanning flat farmland from
 my secluded perch.
 I squint at the sun,
 bite fruit,
 imagine
 a short walk down a dirt path
 leads to a secret tear in the fence
 almost overgrown with twisting vine
 I squeeze inside
 to enter the dark solitude of woods
 wander along the edge of a stream
 shafts of light angling through trees
 and glistening on the scales of a carp.
 I slowly float my hand in the cool
 waters, fins splash
 vanishing.
 I close my eyes and bury myself
 in a pile of leaves
 inhaling the rich, damp scent of earth,

an aperitif for standing silent
 near a swarm of bees.
 Cicadas wait as I pass.
 I lie on my stomach,
 tracking ants
 on their march to invade
 a newly fallen, broken bird.
 At the edge of the trees
 someone has made a swing
 from ropes and wood.
 I square my brown shoes on the seat
 and pump
 until I'm high enough to see
 long rows of corn converging,
 perfectly
 with the horizon.
 Air is cooling as the sun lowers.
 I hear the whistle of my father, calling.
 Untangling slowly from my nest
 shadows of my future stretch before me.

Dear God We're Getting Warmer

It's not what I was taught,
 that I'd find you in the ordinary.
 Like tonight at the Blue Agave,
 Neal's banjo case
 seems a sacred partner to the instrument,
 patiently waiting.

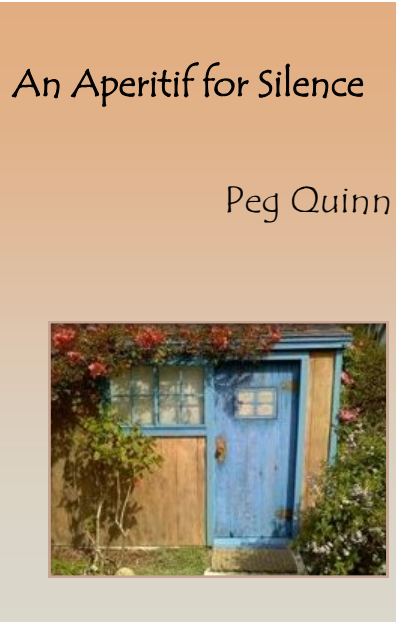
I'd been misled.
 I thought you'd stand before
 my brother's hearse
 like a bearded New York traffic cop,
 thrust out your palm and make it stop
 but here you are, forty-two years later
 a sheer white curtain, breathing
 between the velvet drapes,
 rising
 again, and again
 through an open window.
 And Paul arrives
 wearing his varsity jacket.
 as Kurt reads Ithaca,
 And tears in my eyes
 until I'm high enough to see
 perfectly
 with the horizon.

Mangos

I ate two mangos for breakfast
 while standing over the kitchen sink,
 peeling, slicing, thinking how objects
 of nature face their fate without
 complaint, then, how the color mango
 differs from, say, apricot, becoming
 clown-like, dripping mango mess while
 consumed by the idea that sacrifice
 contains elements so complex, we've
 conjured whole religions,
 desperate to make sense.

Acknowledgment

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Origami Poetry Project™

An Aperitif for Silence

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