

CAROLYN SRYGLEY-MOORE

Tell Back to Me a Story

Today I woke up angry. The scarlet moon, tilted like a teacup
& half-erased, tells back to me a story.
I am hot with tears. I am hot with the dahlia that looks in the mirror
& sees no beauty. I am wild with the story
plump with treehouses & fathers & rivers, with apprehension
& regret; with mother, bringing me supper even when
I've been bad. It is always enough // it is never enough.

Some days I wake up angry. The three-foot tall cattail
by the road, the things you gathered in like wishes
to arrange in that black-cat vase by the fireplace, they are going
the way first frost takes things; but it is not too late
for their gathering. They cling, clutch at, their color
as it recedes. Their softness,
like the soft flesh of youth.

As the snow falls // as the metronome clicks // you touch
my back, gingerly, as if I am a cancer, as if
cancer is contagious...It is never quite enough.
When the homeless approach me do I relinquish
the coin // that toothless old man
that camps out behind the convenience store
& says he's in love with me: do I give him a kiss?

I should dress in camouflage. I have seen my own warfront
filled with treehouses & fathers & rivers
& doors broken down, & scissors flung.
& I wake up hot, & I wake up angry.
Nobody leaves my supper at the door,
my beautiful piano-shaped door.
Yet sometimes, it is enough // more than enough.