

Readings for December 29, 2019

First reading

How to Enter This World

Barbara Brooks

This body a mountain, a forest, a place
to climb into and out of, rock hard
slippery in winter, silky in summer
a cascade of water which pools
as it rests, deepens to wells
deep silent in sleep.

This body can bloom into lilacs
purple and folded with memory as
it grows old, this body
was planted with seeds
when the old moon
was new.

Now a garden of tenderness this body ripe
with tomatoes, ruffled
with lettuces, broccoli, chard
this body was wild once
with strawberries, kumquats
persimmons and plums.

Now this body a mountain, a forest
a field left abandoned to flourish
by chance it may sleep
it may keep dreams
alive, it may thrive it
may weep.

Second reading

Streaming From Me Like a River

Rainer Maria Rilke

I believe in all that has never yet been spoken.
I want to free what waits within me
so that what no one has dared to wish for
may for once spring clear
without my contriving.

If this is arrogant, God, forgive me,
but this is what I need to say.
May what I do flow from me like a river,
no forcing and no holding back,
the way it is with children.

Then in these swelling and ebbing currents,
these deepening tides moving out, returning,
I will sing you as no one ever has,
streaming through widening channels
into the open sea.

from Book of Hours: Love Poems to God,
translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy