

The Water Poem

(Anna)

Our own beginnings were swimmings
in the dark and maybe this is why
we find our way flowing in darkness
over each other like water, loosening
the secrets and hardened places
until all that was fearsome

dissolves and streams together
forgiven, and I think it could
be this easy to die, falling like rain

into the ocean and lifted as
mist in the early haze
where there are no edges.

Praying For No Rain

(Paul)

He remembered when he'd been
a child, the times he'd prayed,
ferocious red prayer blooming
at the edge of his weedy Sunday School faith,
that it not rain the night
it was his turn to pitch.
the long twilights when he threw blinding
white suns at batters made him a believer; sometimes he would genuflect
as he'd seen players do on t.v.,
genuflect and spit, hiding that maybe-
heart of his success
from his Methodist parents.
If it rained, he was being punished;

he usually knew what for, then,
what transgression had been fairly noted. But, his baseball years gone,
justice
was the word that choked him now; the system was inconsistent, mercy
as capricious as rain falling
on the just.

As his wife sickened and sickened
and he half-carried her everywhere
he thought of genuflecting, spitting.

Once he lit a candle
beneath stained glass windows the bled
color like eternal wounds.

We are becoming more and more
the children we were, he noticed,
and when he couldn't get the old system
out of his mind, began
to keep his thoughts carefully
away from prayer.