

FOR LACK OF DIAMOND YEARS



POEMS

CAROLINE BEASLEY-BAKER

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La Fovea: “blush/in 3 colors,” “calamity/calm in the cutaway in 5 colors,” and “hesitate/the first blossom in 3 colors”; *Mobius, The Poetry Magazine*: “goodbye/going & gone?”; *The MOM Egg*: “fusion/star baby” and “headlong/all fall down”; *MungBeing Magazine*: “butterfly/undone,” “carpenter/my captain & refrain,” “dead/yet still our neurons fire back hello,” “echo/boomerang or stick?,” “faithful/by clock & compass,” “helpmate/hold me back with love,” “idyll/prince hal in 9 colors,” “mythos/her limits are for her to know,” “nativity/early spring,” “NIGHTINGALE,” “old-fashioned-robotic/a romance,” “prairie/around the campfire,” “pre-school/eyes & ears,” “rakshashi/into the unknown unknown,” “red/lost & found,” “repair/the prodigal self,” “sea-shanty/iceland,” “soothsay/mediterranea in 2 colors,” “sun-up/sun-down (after rilke & thoreau),” “superstition/extremely longing,” “trifle/isn't it romance?,” “winter/now i lay me down in 3 colors,” “wooing/one more frog goes a-courtin’”; *Qarrtsiluni*: “Our Rowdy Pack Song” (excerpt); *The Chained Hay(na)ku Project*, Meritage Press, 2010, San Francisco, CA: “Marine Acid Air” and “The OO OO Chain” (excerpts).

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www.carolinebeasley-baker.com

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faithful/by clock & compass

each morning she and the spotted dog step from the porch
— walk-trotting east into the Sonoran desert.

she counts as she goes to mark time
until a sparrow hawk — for example — flies south

calling her to restart
the step-count and follow . . .

and so it goes until they find themselves
reoriented to west and home.

then one day — sun-blinded while pivoting west —
she steps off a cliff into opaque air and the dog leaps to
follow . . .

she thinks only this:

crazy dog — *the proof is in the pudding* —
at the very least you have always attended to your own
true north . . .

and now my love — we float we flow we fly?



ascent/call me up from the dead

who stood at the bottom
of the rude stoop — crying — *Catullus*

Catullus

come to me now — come?

can you find me Catullus?

can i find you?

but then where in the midst of the starling chatter
— the wah/wahing of the cop car — the rash
rush/rushing — can we expect to find someone
who knows

something of the bold clatter
of black branches scratching at the cold sky?



Nothing
*fr***I**ghtens
a **G**reat
Hear**t** —
Terrifying
Innocence
— *a***N**gels
*dis***G**raced —
*un***A**dorned
Love
*requit***E**s.





butterfly/undone

slow —
caught beating-fast
against the waterfall

— so-riotous/
proud — my
startled heart's unstrung

— crushed —
exotica/delicious
glass — i tarantella

in stardusty-lanes
transfixed —
so daring surfeit:

bangles — antiphonal loud.



clique/long to belong?

there're always lines —
waiting lists to get into clubs/groups
nobody with any sense should desire
to be a part of in the first place —

why is this?

. . . our insatiable yen to be preferred:
 please-choose-me-i'm-really-plum
— *now* — i'm-really-really-plum . . . ?

DNA — an indiscriminate yin/a collective yang . . . ?

yet it's possible to miss a cilia of this bio-goo —
when the special invitation comes —
my internal compass almost-always-spins
to a kind of lilting vague:

no/no thanks/i think not . . .



goodbye/going & gone?

the hindu part of me will be cremated on a saturday.
the catholic part will be buried in the midst of incense
and unreconstructed church latin.
the jewish part will be consoled by the sounds of kaddish.
the animist part of me will be a whirly-whirly —
a dust- or sun-devil skipping from this desert
to that dry prairie or plain until i rise far above this earth
— far/far-and-away beyond ideas of divinity
and stardust.

but however many disparate ways i find myself allotted —
in my last/possible moment —
i promise to honor us all
— what was mine i give to you and you.



"FOR LACK of DIAMOND YEARS is pitch perfect, deeply felt yet not sentimental, an absolutely true-blue and richly unadorned dance with the language..."

— Holly Anderson

FOR LACK of DIAMOND YEARS is an idiosyncratic collection of short poems—most under 20 lines—where questions lead the way. But, at its heart, this book of poems is a quixotic narration between realms of being—from the quotidian into the sometimes numinous, sometimes murky realm of the unknown/unknown, and on into a kind of revamped transcendental. There is a thread of praise that runs throughout—an embrace of the joys and sorrows of thinking and feeling, of love and loss.

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