

Please recycle... to a friend.

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Cover: Degas-esque by Helen Burke

Origami Poetry Project™

Once I knew
Helen Burke • 2015



Donations Greatly Appreciated



Once I
Knew

Helen Burke

And ...some people spend their whole lives, snowed in.
But we've been lucky, we have braved the blizzard
And gotten soaked through to the skin.
Do you remember the funny house in Wales
And waking to a prisoner level of the white stuff.
It felt like a weight had been lifted from me
I could just stay within the snow circle
And let the frost and the icicles do the rest.
Everything was white, my soul, my bones, my blood.
And yet I have never felt so alive.
As if a great drifting lay above and below me
And little particles of my small self dissolving
Into the December day.
From the top window I could still see the world... just.
I could see the perfection of what might be achieved
If we could just hang on in there...
And a figure walking in the distance that I knew
To be myself.

Snowed In

I could close my eyes
And feel the plumage of the forest
And the flight of the birds,
And the dancing girl
Who so easily captures the minarets and towers
Of eternity that its love .. in her two feet.
When I was an apple.
When I was a grain of sand, then
I knew nothing .
Except that I was a dancing girl
With a sparrow for a soul
And a dreamer for my spirit self –
And an apple for my head –
Flowing and rolling away to the seas edge
To the ends of the world,
Under the bridge of time
Where all such dear friends are gathered..
Until the end of the world –
Then all is revealed.
When I was a grain of sand.
All is revealed.

Once I knew

When I was a dancer , then
I knew what I was about.
When I was a dreamer, then
I knew what I was about.
I could hover over a green field and place
The heart of it into my ribs, and laugh
That I could do this.
When I was a dreamer.
When I was a dancer.
And balance on the edge of clouds.
Down from the sky and wear them both
I could pluck the blue sky and the moon
I knew what I was about.
When I was a dancer , then
I knew what I was about.
I could pluck the blue sky and the moon
Down from the sky and wear them both
And balance on the edge of clouds.
When I was a dancer.
When I was a dreamer, then
I knew what I was about.
I could hover over a green field and place
The heart of it into my ribs, and laugh
That I could do this.
When I was a dreamer.
When I was a sparrow, then
I knew what I was about.
I could tether the air to my wings
And become each tree, each drop of nectar
That dazzled me in flight.
When I was a sparrow.
When I was an apple, then
I knew what I was about.

Man Sweeping Leaves

So , it's like this.
A man is sweeping leaves in the garden.
He sweeps all the troubles of the world away.
I ask you what you are sweeping and you say
World peace into that corner
And against the flower border, an end to famine.
And in the centre, I say... where all the leaves are piled like
A mountain of souls ??
That is all our happy days piled up together... lest we forget them.
And you sweep for another hour .
A man who understands the art of leaves
Is a man amongst men.
And myself behind the glass reaching out to you,
To the air that swirls around you and speaks of an end to winter.
And the snowdrops by the door cheering you on.