

## The Blessing of the Old Woman, the Tulip, and the Dog

To be blessed  
said the old woman  
is to live and work  
so hard  
God's love  
washes right through you  
like milk through a cow

To be blessed  
said the dark red tulip  
is to knock their eyes out  
with the slug of lust  
implied by  
your up-ended  
skirt

To be blessed  
said the dog  
is to have a pinch  
of God  
inside you  
and all the other dogs  
can smell it

## The Vow

I must solve my life  
said the old woman  
thinking of her grandchildren  
and of her marriage  
and of her many former lovers

I must solve my life  
said the red tulip, arranging her skirts  
troubled by the ache of sunshine  
the squirrels and dogs  
far too hyperactive

I must solve my life, said the dog  
torn between tame and wild  
bouncing from chow bowl to street  
addicted to human love  
dumb animal

## Deer Walk Upon Our Mountains

When they see me said the old woman  
they stop where they are  
and gaze into my eyes for as long  
as I am willing to stand there  
in the wind  
at the edge of the forest

You are speaking of my mortal enemy  
said the dark red tulip  
they have eaten many of my family  
they do not spare children  
they are pests  
beauty excuses nothing

Oh cried the dog  
the very thought of them  
thrills me to the bone  
the chase as much as the capture  
the scent weaving ahead of me like a flag  
saliva spinning from my teeth