

Not a Single Death is Wasted

In the dream, she is a tree
her roots braid the ground
a gnarled jackfruit--
tight misshapen fruit
bulging from ankles and wrists,
breaking through rough elbows.
A crow beaks
the yellow flesh.

In the dream, she is a tree.

In the dream, she is a baby bird
crumpled wings unfeathered
falling from a nest
in the high branches.

The pain is a thin wire
through her--she twists round it
and the blue door of the sky
slams shut.

In the dream, she is a bird.

In the dream, she is in Happy House.

She is both in the house and outside

looking in. The teak armoires crouch
on clawed lion feet.

She spills Happy House
like water through her fist.

In the dream, she knows the shapes
of the other dreams—
soft buildings in the mist.

She knows the going in
and the coming out
and the trembling every time.

In the dream, time is shattered
and things are thin.

She hurries down the old trail
slippery with spray,
through the brown sludge
of leaves underfoot,
past the mushroom-ears
curving from the base of giant trees
to where the dark water foams and swirls.
In the dream, not a single death is wasted.