

# JACINTA LE PLASTRIER

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## Cyme

*cyme* (pron. sy-me) a system of flowering, where the first axis produces a single terminal flower, from which secondary and higher ranks of flowers develop, each following the system.

### I

1

the children spill stolen oils on their bodies  
and curl, like little gods  
in the water which laps at their skins  
the children chase the glinting air  
swift with bubbles  
such opulence!  
mouths blowing miracles which flee

perhaps I was thinking of counting the stars  
when I spoke, instead, of words  
so I should be a child  
the eye fresh with constellations  
and no terror of infinity

2

time is language.  
mouth of elements,

alluvial, bearing me here.  
mouth of lava,

whose fierce transformations  
measure me here.

no words forgotten  
though the names clot

behind history, my tongue split

in so many directions  
I could not be understood or trusted

3

it is like  
hunger

we hunt the cavern  
we find the cavern  
we replete it with stones

lifting stones like miracles  
from the mute-child's tongue

4

I would say I remember  
it is not a dream

the sun was inside my skin  
the warmth of the sun

fell into me  
grass was ancient cloth

bees sang into ears.

prayer of fertility,  
I swore to this

on this day  
a child's dress,

forgotten hair.  
what did I swear against

that I made this pledge  
so pungently

it stirs in me now

5

what breaks in me  
always breaks in me

the eye which saw  
and burned when all was silent

origin?  
I have no memory

joy?  
it is forgotten

birth?  
not this

though its knowledge  
knots in me

the snap of being  
before lungs broke into breath

## II

1

spewed into light  
first spawn of your womb  
I was tumultuous.  
and named

on the suck of you  
I named you.

did I imagine once

dug behind night,  
the deep gnaw  
of my cry

burn you through  
when you held me

in the helpless  
hands of mother?

2

the small bird  
smarts against

the glass.  
and wounded, flies

until it remembers:  
window, the clear

violence which almost  
broke her voice

3

children are ungrateful.  
drunk on the blood

of trees and stone.  
so seven children ate you.

but surely you shattered  
in your own time ago

into metal.  
and we had no charm

no balm strong enough  
not even these words

4

the snake flew,  
bitten into two

by your axe.  
and five small faces

upturned, like scared moons  
and blinding the smell

of death, the jasmine  
strangling the out-house

and the dog, hysterical  
juggling snake-bit

into air  
where it flew,

immobile now  
as memory's myth

the wife who did it  
you did. on your own

5

when I spoke again  
it was of small places  
what we survive in  
with brusque eyes.  
the earth which bites our bodies  
is my mouth, we call it earth  
so words are brief, take them  
for what I dedicate mutely

III

1

sweet daughter  
diminutive one  
by the passage of myself  
you were born

this place  
of blood and moans  
and squatting bore you  
which is the song which lives  
in all ears

re-opened in me  
like a miracle  
because I was singing

2

when you have gone, as you will be  
child ruling the stars  
and this faint day is my conjuring  
I will hear you with fidelity

I have seen your small limbs dancing  
with nature's choreography  
and the jump of fears was my making  
for your unpractised fragility

I have known your breath of sleep  
your small god's uncensored dreams  
and as these words are my remembering  
I conjure your lyric, again for me

3

you know  
how many flowers  
I have brought for you

not to deny despair  
but to root a stubbornness  
for beauty

4

little ones,  
whose feet sing mud

whose small palms  
tremble

with a worm,  
a house dug for it.

whose voices flute  
into shrieks, smashing

water into light,  
shards of light.

then scramble  
into the shower,

squeaking  
at its precious warmth.

what you know  
you will not tell us

5

in the sea's  
green clarity  
clear to my skin  
and salted,

I tumble,  
like a fish  
dripping sun

later,  
bare-breasted  
I stand on my hands,  
praising sand

like a child  
emptied  
of questions

IV

1

once I sparkled  
with the arms of the waterfall  
grateful  
for its effervescence  
not solid  
yet insistent

but what is this  
we hold in hands  
so suddenly  
quiet as stone

perhaps  
you thought  
I was a god  
the way I glittered  
through courses of mud

how white  
my mercy was  
and how cleanly  
I opened  
my garnet mouth

but  
be assured  
I shook  
every moment

I carry the ghosts of you  
in my hand, O  
small trembling-heart  
hand, the deep  
of your gaze  
embedded, like a blade

bloodily have I held you.

when in night's loneliness,  
I almost forgave you

yet how simple  
my vow has been,  
struck as it was  
into word

sleep?  
we stir as tigers  
tiger-breath  
limb-start

mated me  
in the shrink of it.  
the chilled eye of it

bee-tongue  
to anther

I am not grateful.  
I placed  
my mouth to your skin  
and my palm  
pressed your heart  
my open palm

waging nothing,  
outside the instant  
of this syllable  
breaking

4

the fleck of moments  
that bred to this,  
the brute journey  
almost complete

how always  
I have named love  
at the verge  
of fear's oldest moment

lured it  
into a warmth  
simply, a nest of arms  
cradling me back

to origin.  
where another breathed for me.  
so I slept again,  
and waited

now the masts sway  
and fall from me.  
leaving me to weight  
alone, under my weight

I crawl,  
breathless beast,  
through the ancient lip  
of severance

5

how all will end:  
in the prostrated whisper

hands held to nothing  
but the ash of touch

the fledgling word, fleeing:  
its slow assent to night

your body  
of blackness

pressed  
by blackness

mute.

V

1

again, time slips,  
ceaseless fracture

what was silent  
wakes again

which always  
we shudder hands

closed against.  
yet it seems impossible

that we slept,  
that this thing

already begun  
did not flinch in us

where scars move deeply.  
can it be they deepen

even as the lash  
of an eye stumbles

across the instant  
fresh as joy?

2

later, the children will quieten:  
the clear silence culled  
at the edge of their laughter,  
where darker children dream:  
of dolls, vagrant their clotted hair.  
and unicorns, slinking  
in the burning light of dawn

3

you open your mouth  
to speak; and the  
syllables are broken

do not speak.  
even in the silence  
you will hear nothing

4

to the skein of your poppy  
a thousand of them, a thousand  
hues of perfect and misshapen petals

to your light thrown out  
and scattered and drawn back again  
its enflamed, pale petals

the building's majesty  
the fountain's dance,  
thundering light

are nothing,  
not even  
memory

5

every moment gathered.  
the shivering lips of touch

perfecting every word uttered  
in the awkward arms of love

joy's living vein weeping  
into the promised mouth of dust

*March 1992 - August 1993*