

I

Be good was the demand
As we pulled on sticky stockings
Bright sharp bows that poked
The sides of our heads

The sky had just started to sputter
When we loaded ourselves into
The dark interior of the van
But was now dumping

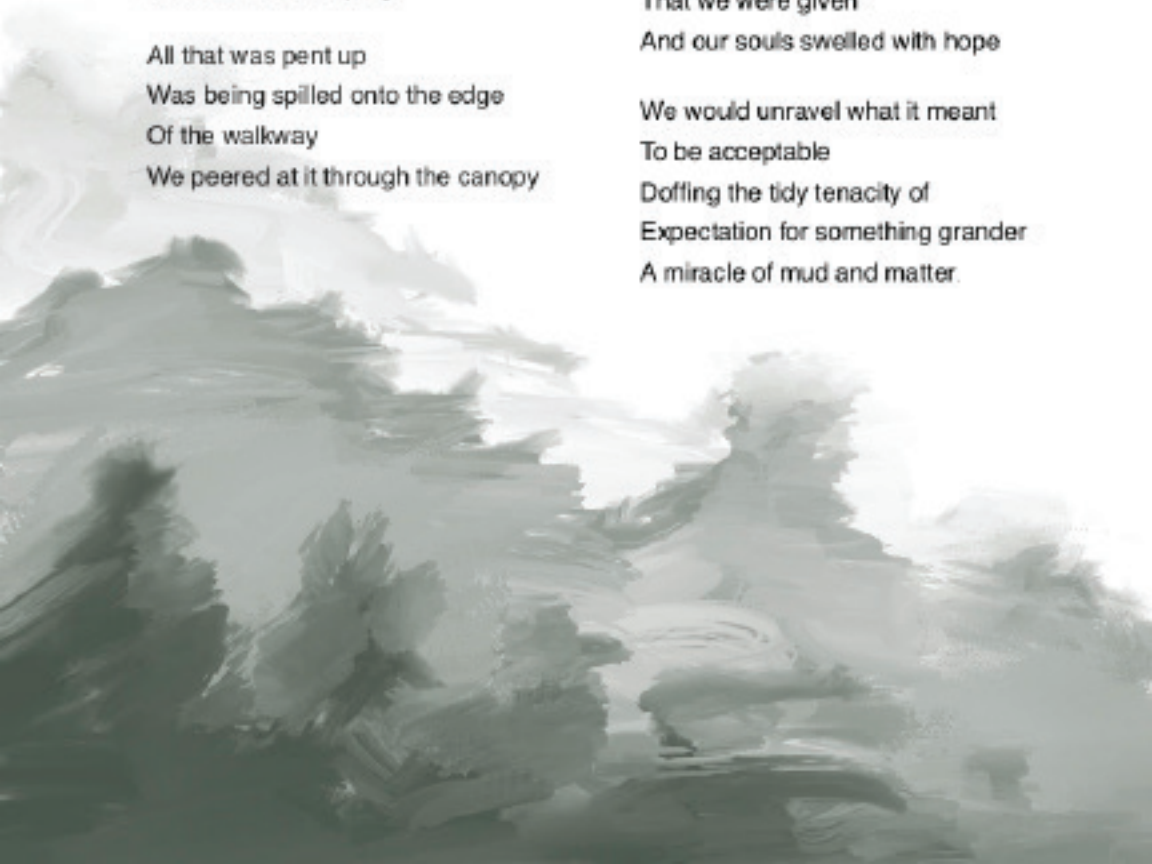
All that was pent up
Was being spilled onto the edge
Of the walkway
We peered at it through the canopy

That protected and hindered us
Puddles pulled our hearts
Towards their extravagance
But we were visions to be looked at
Not to be hurled into the grandness
Of the surrounding gale

We shut ourselves into the steepled
Sanctuary and sat
Hands clasped
Feet neatly forward

But there was a shift
Felt in the sideways glance
That we were given
And our souls swelled with hope

We would unravel what it meant
To be acceptable
Doffing the tidy tenacity of
Expectation for something grander
A miracle of mud and matter.



2

An abundance of rain
Drips onto the mud stained concrete.
We watch as we shelter
Behind closed doors wrapped in layers
Despite the humidity that pulls
Thick drops of sweat from our nose's bridge
We press our cheeks
Against the cool glass window

The sky gives and gives and gives
Even as we retreat from its generosity
We do not know how to receive this blessing
Dressed as it is in puddles of sludge
That will track into our pristine places.
We brush the bounty from our doorsteps
Leaving lines that direct us towards
This blemished beauty

We've been given
A cataclysm for an inheritance
That will not fit into our palms
Though we've been asked to hold it
It leaks through our fingertips
Throwing all our carefully cleaned places
Into a ravishing river

When we enter,
the smells overpower:
roasting crunchy carrots,
melting butter dripping from crisp croissants.
“Goodness,” I say “it’s too much,”
but I am already being handed a glass
and coaxed into a warm chair.

3

Outside large drops of rain plop to the ground,
the gutters are gushing,
there’s a drip from the ceiling and
a bucket underneath is already overflowing.
Gusts of wondering wind
push branches up against the windows,
they scratch at the doors
and we throw them open.

Others pull themselves from the storm,
drop the armor that protects them from the torrent,
drip their way in
and settle.

The smell of moist earth mingles
with the scent of warm bread
We cannot help but to proffer bits of this or that to each other.
“Try this!” I hear myself say again and again.

Someone has sidled up to the piano and is playing something
Beethoven, perhaps, or is it Brahms?
It starts tentatively, and then explodes
into a torrent of notes.

With purple tinted lips we hold out our hands for more.
Our cup overflows.