

The Jacket

Sealed with valves and tape,
bricks and rope, lock and key.
Hold in the pressure, that is mounting in me tight.
Tangling my arms in a straight jacket to keep in line.

It's hard to harvest in this state.
The food beneath my feet the only one I can reach
I can only gnaw at it with my teeth
Better than nothing, I bitterly wail.

I have spent many years hunting for food.
Digging in ditches,
Scrounging around and following scents.
Eating beneath trees that would fall and trap me.
Bury me under their rotting trunks.

The Beast

In my body are two creatures.
The beast and the Spirit.
They both call to me
One says it will lead me to freedom
Lead me by my desire and needs
But it is nothing more than a trick of the dark.
Following my own truth
only to find that I have merely scraped the top off
what I truly needed.
I was no where near free, a slave to anger and frustration,
broken and pleasure seeking, comfort and briefly satiated needs.
Like the difference between a grape flavored candy
and the fruit straight off the vine.
I said I wanted grapes, this cavity inducing imposter
is nothing like the real thing
Chaining me to addiction, to lies, to bitterness, fractured factions.

I gave my chains over to the Spirit.
I told Him what I thought I needed.
I said I would follow,
and he took my chains from around my arms and out of my hands
He untied the straight jacket despite my protests.
What horrible things would my hands do now,
What urges would they reach out for if not tied down?
I started to stuff fists back into my sagging pockets,
laden with candy jewels,
But He gently opened my fingers, kissed my palm,
saying "let me show you how to find the real thing.
Now that your arms have been untangled"

The Orchard

We are walking in an orchard,
Fruit high above us in the treetops.
Fruit below us decomposing on the ground.
Off which I have survived for so long.
It is still there, the beast nudges it into my attention.

I have only so much time before the light dims
A few measly hours in which to work.
I can pick fruit off the ground and fill my basket before the light fades.
Bring back something at least.
Scraping my nails through the dirt.

But who wants to share in such a bounty?
If I bring back this maggot filled rotten peach flesh,
No one who receives it will be fed.
Will these morsels make their way to dance upon my tongue?
The ones that, while sweet, churn in my stomach
Souring and poisoning my system.

These hands will pick, these hands will choose.
Open, guided by the God who fills me.
Who fills my basket with good fruits, shows me where we can find them.
What to choose and what to leave behind,
if I would listen, watch and follow.

I am free.
To give with generosity the fruit in our weighed down basket.
Together we head home in the dimming light.
Leaving out bounty on doorsteps and in desperate hands.

We sit on the porch with twinkling stars and sweetness on my lips.
How good it is to cling close to the Spirit.
My hands are dancing, open, waiting.
How good it is to be free,
To follow the Spirit into the orchard each day.