

## MOTHERS AGAINST METAPHOR

“Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?”  
Please don’t, or not if you value our friendship.  
“My love is like a red, red rose.” How shocking!  
*I mean what I say.*

To what shall I compare my twisted daughter,  
source of clanging sounds? My blasted  
hopes? Her starry hand beached on the strand  
of her mother’s breast,

she stirred expensive men to rudeness. So  
I put my books away for good,  
and cells and symbols poured from our storming brains.  
*You’ll thank me some day.*

For you, dear friend who lost your only son,  
it must have been a grief so wild  
it burned the world. You could not rebuild;  
you walked away.

A simple spider would put on a stone  
to bear about in place of young  
and charm the desolation of her loss.  
*You take what you get.*

So art can but create eternities,  
impervious and odor-free,  
while every day steals a child away  
and leaves another:

just as fondly cherished, just as feebly  
clutched at by compare to lesser  
works in flesh and flower, rock and river.  
*Waste not, want not.*

What’s left when all that perishes is gone?  
Not even a lion or a rose.  
Another world than this one, tiny but perfect,  
no one can spoil:

revered delusion, just like all delusions,  
stopping time with chatter of beauty,  
crafted by proud authors to keep them sane.

*No more, no less.*

From “cold white peaks” of self-congratulation,  
they brood upon the scene below  
or, throwing their caps in the air, they prance in step,  
crying, “Flimnap Forever.”

Reward of sport, the bonhomie and spoils,  
belong to those who play The Game;  
and No Girls Allowed except on Sundays.

*You'll be sorry.*

But games need only serve and not be true.  
Balked by a thousand stony griefs,  
I look at men of consequence and see  
grooming baboons.

Where there is no recovery for one,  
there's none for her who truly mourns.  
Doubt what's done, what's lifeless, timeless, prized.

*Because, that's why.*

Doubt that the eyes and bones of the Only One  
yet sleep in speech of pearls and coral.  
Tell the truth, that the best is always gone  
and yet to come.

Once quick, it runs to death despite our wish.  
Beyond compare to stars and starfish,  
every mortal form shall fleeting reign.

*I mean what I say.*