

Blessing the Boats

New and Selected Poems 1988–2000

by

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✓ **grief**

begin with the pain
of the grass
that bore the weight
of adam,
his broken rib mending
into eve,

imagine
the original bleeding,
adam moaning
and the lamentation of grass.

from that garden,
through fields of lost
and found, to now, to here,
to grief for the upright
animal, to grief for the
horizontal world.

pause then for the human
animal in its coat
of many colors. pause
for the myth of america.
pause for the myth
of america.

and pause for the girl
with twelve fingers
who never learned to cry enough
for anything that mattered,

not enough for the fear,
not enough for the loss,
not enough for the history,
not enough

for the disregarded planet.
not enough for the grass.

then end in the garden of regret
with time's bell tolling grief
and pain,
grief for the grass
that is older than adam,
grief for what is born human,
grief for what is not.

■

report from the angel of eden

i found them there
rubbing against the leaves
so that the nubs of their
wings were flush under their skin

and it seemed like dancing
as when we angels
praise among the clouds
but they were not praising You

i watched
the grass grow soft and rich
under their luminous bodies
and their halos begin to fade

it was like dancing
creation flowered around them
moaning with delight they were
trembling and i knew

a world was being born
i feared for their immortality
i feared for mine
under the strain of such desire

i knew
they could do evil
with it and i knew
they would

when i remembered what i was
i swiveled back unto Your grace
still winged i think but wondering
what now becomes what now

of Paradise

■

the birth of language

and adam rose
fearful in the garden
without words
for the grass
his fingers plucked
without a tongue
to name the taste
shimmering in his mouth
did they draw blood
the blades did it become
his early lunge
toward language
did his astonishment
surround him
did he shudder
did he whisper
eve

■