

# 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