

## Poems by Annie Blake

### THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

*for evie*

/ feminine mother / blame her for the famine / my god child / egocentric and all-knowing /  
in the schizoid-depressive position / arcane klein / for she was the source / but her own children  
had been cut off / my life is far from cogent / metallurgy is alchemy for the sensory /  
for individuation is the bedding and my budding with god / and a woman / her worship  
and his wrath / because i suck and i suck / for all men must be suckled / his playground  
and the collective / is the collection box at church / for joseph / womb and wood-worker  
and pinocchio / thick as two planks / does anyone remember him /  
/ i stay home to finish the laundry / and most underestimate the significance of the washhouse /  
for the ego is the intersection in the road / i have a body somewhere / sprawled like a swastika /  
artistic and avant-garde / her arms must grow olive green / fettered in the field / salted  
and peppered / the flood makes her body-blood / earth laden / molested and moist-mad /  
remember that the road less travelled / far from the madding crowd / through the swinging steps  
of her spine / he has never taken /  
/ until his mother lies down / her dress a net / a tearing in the blue sea / give of my son /  
for his father is ancient / maiden maddona and i'm the whore / he uses her box / ovum shaped  
and supple for god / our unhuman hands / he wears a long skirt / made out of his wife's hair /  
his mother carries her phylacteries / egg and onion /  
/ he never reads my writing because i'm a mixing bowl / a teaspoon of respect / a teaspoon  
of fear / he said / i have no dose that will work in you / then why did god give you dreams /  
he looks out the window / he says / the grass needs to be cut / i feel you walk and i'm a meadow /  
he says / it will be too hard to mow when it reaches a certain height / i tell him to look at me  
and what do you see / you're angry / i look into his face / and there it is / his face a collectable  
and my anger at once /  
/ wheat pedal / water paddle / they tell me my clothes are assyrian and anachronistic / my winter  
weathering makes me fickle / and his pumpkin seed / plump the skin with all my worth /  
for money in the box is the summer seed / unwinding and syllogistic / lips like a path / is so still-  
mouthed / let me tell you / what cracks against the bowl /                      / i have never been able to peel /

## HIS ROOM IS A YELLOW GROWER / A HOTHOUSE

*'The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable ...' (1 Corinthians 15:42)*

/ her house is the devil's world / the next rooms of the river dawn and haven / the exchange  
of thrilly throats / a refrigerator is a room full of ice / the woman from the burning  
wood / she makes her legs a triangle by giving up her arms / she makes us soup and gives  
a child / the fridge man has seven heads / terrorists and the apocalypse archetype / the zealot  
ploughs on for no one in particular / his hands are like ash spades / let them lick the blood  
off my hands /

/ on the mantle shelf / there are jars of hives and jams / breasts of milk / baby in an ornamental  
cradle / for the protevangelium is a monumental occasion / necklace of beads like eyes / pacing  
and reeling in the dark / child's doll / last night leaves silver butter knives stuck in honey pots /  
mother container / the analyst and the analysand / extant marriage /

/ my two-bits worth / the hollow room / a hollow trunk / the wind in the willows /  
for those who cannot tolerate modernism cannot escape the crib / of his premature son /  
the railway tracks is being lost in the woods / he's asleep in his bed / a rocking chair / or a lock in  
at school / alien antennae / twirl as mist and dusk / curl of candle smoke / arabic dancer / her  
fingers in the hot sun / hypnotic lullaby / the yellow and the heat in the room at three  
o'clock in the afternoon /

/ my mouth heavy and agape with sin / parched pouch / perched on his sleep  
sounds / next to me / oven knobs and a warmed stove / gas and disorientation like clouds / they  
sit and surround us / heads in calico bags / because impunity / but we can't escape the key  
to open a box of jewels / or a casket / sinking in the cask /

/ crystal moon / levitates / attaches to the chord / room lamp / to watch over me / round table  
of wood / pinecones and shells / seeds in the mud of the Nile / till morning is moist in the tomb /  
makes us grey instead of black / because first he was hard to swallow and then we all loved /  
healing salve / his white water sprouting /

/ sticky and soft /

## OVER THE RAINBOW

*'There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls...'*

*'Here's to my love! O true apothecary! Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.'* in *Romeo and Juliet* (Act 5, scenes 1 & 3)

/ toaster cage grips the bread / takes it in heat / metal hands in prayer / her children  
are made to watch as she sears / for the inquisition / hollowed be thy name / she was a demon /  
but fish rolled off her belly and the children ate / for seers are endless and timeless / tetramorph  
and the book of kells / mary magdalene / christ drew out her seven demons / to draw the sword /  
and her seven chakras / she didn't hide when they fled in fear / for she traversed herself / a herald  
of the resurrection / gospel of mary / the apocryphal texts / fishing village / magdala tarichaea  
and a tower of salted fish /  
/ the fisherman and his wife / the sea turned into the color of a bruise / the golden fish is a gnostic  
/ the rainbow snake is beneficent until i take what doesn't belong to me / a key in a gate  
at the edge of the forest / house like a tombstone / it was he / out of the rock / troubadours  
and my devotion / for many are afraid of witches / more than a stern / head / of a ship / with cut  
hair and no pine tree hat / who wear black and spread their dead / someday / her veil raised /  
her crown will be spared / and she will walk a cross the hem of the stage / a mermaid with a tail  
and legs / from the demiurge / god of the night sky / usurper of light / provider of the poison  
apple /  
/ a nazi banging on the door / my dad with a bushel of sweet peas / stepped outside from the rain  
/ i saw a horse / still in the countryside / dried vines / embroiled in her landscape / her cart  
was long and heavy / wheels / dark hollows / hallowed wreaths on the door / of a chariot / konark  
stone temple for surya / the seven colors of the rainbow / and a pot of children / for there must  
be a price paid for gold teeth / the wheels are sundials / for those who rise wear armlets / biceps /  
humps of a camel / when i untie my halterneck / for marys unite and wear loyal blue / can fly  
higher than chimneys / for jews became clouds who shed as rain /  
/ two maidens in a pond / one rising from the water / kissing christ high above / means sending  
a message of salvation / they had long golden hair / crown of immortality / i wish upon a star  
and thread and a net for fish / for poison is far more expensive than gold /

## THE SILENTRY

*for ruby (rubedo)*

/ self-inventory / seedless web / children are often idealistic / and children and cars often collide /  
my child got attacked by a cat / she was lying on the road like she was hit by a car / sank  
into the sea / water serpent / bellies undulating like waves and currents do / when i couldn't keep  
my mouth open at the dentist / he put in a metal brace / padmanabhaswamy temple / iron door  
of the chamber and two cobra snakes / and only a mystic chant can open the door / i used to find  
it difficult to pry my son's fingers from the safe gate when he was infantile / a net gun  
or a tranquilizer gun / a metal tripod / to get stuck in the snake's mouth so it would choke /  
her dress / frills like waves / invisible jellyfish / body frolicking with the flow / ancient chinese  
dragon / qi and qigong / two snakes at sanggar agung temple / black rock / wet with rain /  
mesopotamian bulls with gold horns / are crescent moons / she released ichthyoplankton /  
sentient / earth relationships should be reciprocal not instrumental / serpents can swallow  
like tsunamis do / materiality of the sea / i will only slay the minotaur / i will never be the saint /  
flying monkeys and a cross-generational coalition / human bodies filling oat-white  
from the ground / large paws of kangaroos / when they sense danger they thump their feet  
on the ground / dragon teeth / soft and green / like reeds / madonna and her cone breasts /  
fountain of neptune / his thumb and the lactating nereid / i'll wear gold armlets for wings /  
the bracer / the bow and the arrow / siddhi / walking on water or diving through rock / fire  
burning in my mouth / i had to leave at least a crumb / bread loaf paper / scrolls and buns for my  
children / the labyrinth of crete / vaginal maze / how i must free myself from my mother / gauzed  
in a silver winter web / jewels should never be placed in children's boxes / nor inside temple  
vaults / a curved no through court / clay gods and meat / the mortaring of pebbles in my mouth /  
winding path like wu wei / they brought with them the ruins of a house / ephemera and human  
bones / erratic and erotic /  
// huntsman / fingers like legs //

## THE SUNKEN PLACE

*'And not all the king's men nor his horses*

*Will resurrect his corpus...' by James Joyce in Finnegans Wake*

/ my hands let the baby in the tar / i imagined it drowning / my floating papoose / tikkanaagan /  
canopy and a pouch of herbs / for my umbilical cord / decorated deep like a kimono / steeped  
in family / kranes can live for a thousand years / she is yearning / how to sleep curled and soft /  
her skirt made out of grass / huntsmen caught in wire webs / because the tower of babel  
reminds me of skyscrapers / flying carpet / out of this world / my suitcases packed  
upon my never ending tongues / in my head / tucked in penis / cucumbers in a vase / synergy /  
seeds of cucumbers when cut in eyes / a mandala /  
/ james joyce and lucia / o milagre do sol / my sacrifice of silence / snow of dandelions /  
and yellow like the sun / whole moon is the white seed / stars seering and soaring in the wind /  
her moist cradle / soft cotton of her field / because my childhood was white / breasts as eggs /  
but tar has a way of sticking / i saw them once / picking at it in the field / but children  
have to see-saw for yellow / children inured to purity will never blame their mother or father /  
when my son ascended in the elevator / he vanished like vapor / after the bomb /  
and there was no body to bring home / bluestone of old london mazes / have a habit  
of inculcating me /  
/ doors of fishbone / eyes are knobs / that protrude like horns / falcon face / astute / watching  
for perfidiousness / eyelids hooked up like tents / i have fishing hooks / chinese writing  
like pyramids / interiority of a triangle / a dead end / the exterior is an arrow / i watch how  
the frog drowns when i hold its throat above water / intercourse of half-baked chickens / my legs  
rocking / child pharaoh or a pariah / plays in the sands of the desert / small bend of knees  
in a lust dust plane or bowl of the black /  
/ a mountain made of paperclips / one on my lapel and front pocket during the second world war  
/ confetti rises like pastel candy balls / her hide / fringe border around her torso / she beats tribal  
like a drum / because this is what binds me together / not her scrape of her spoon / in sync  
with her cold black tea / two hands / metal and porcelain / corporate white / dark pants / bald  
heads that float like balloons / humpty dumpty / or potatoes / the nadir / colored froot loops  
in a bowl / white milk in a glass / spoon next to the fetus in the womb / and spoon  
theory / when i was five / in the mediterranean /  
/ hot narrow limestone alley ways / / prickly pears /

## PLEASE, SIR, I WANT SOME MORE

*for all children*

/ i'm afraid of heroin rooms / to be the hero / within / to walk in and confront who i am /  
they told me i was allowed to take it / as long as i weened myself off / but never through a vein /  
to surrender / make two and one bite-sized roads / pavement made of cobblestone or / turtle  
with the tide / by and by / he lights a candle in a stable / and a horse door / shinto ritual / his belly  
is the top of a pyramid / chonmage / ginkgo leaf like a crest / or a flabellum made of peacock  
feathers / umbilical cord of a sekitori / like a tail / for balance / the gyoji and his tanto / seppuku  
then kami /

/ my mother mary / was a revolving door / she handed me a fine tooth comb / i was a faerie  
or an angel / stirring chankonabe / silver soup pots as high as towers / steam is the only water  
that can circulate high enough / salini / the peasant and the sea of cabbages /

/ on a good day / the buildings in the city look like they're made of bricks of mist / i found a  
room at the inn because i was so small / bed in a barn / an antique oil-painting and spurious  
art / victorian era drapes / i dusted my mirrors and paintings / roll of hay and the breath  
of animals / i still love cabbage soup with parmesan cheese /

/ i watch decadence like a rain of oats / the tower of babel out of food and fish / planes  
in buildings / but planes are not rockets / wall street and the exploding moon / a bomb  
and i'm in a trench / soporific lettuce / adonis on a wild bed / fountain of his seed / romaine  
and cos / washed in a colander like i'm washing my hair / after i wake from my dreams i feel jet  
lagged / egyptian harvest festival of min / semen and mother's milk /

/ for eve is hawwah / hayyat and hahayyim / ecumenical / but reptilian academia / power  
pedagogy / institutions and corporations / sheep truck trapped of men / the german and the jew /  
the steward and the defender / values and creativity / mammalian nurturing brain / meister  
eckhart / sich lassen / i'm an occidental and i caught a broken rod when i went fishing  
with my dad / the child will be the supplanter / and jelly beans don't ever grow on trees /

## AN EYE FOR AND I, A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH

*"Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate" in Inferno by Dante Alighieri*

/ christ is made out of peeled porcelain / i pushed myself back up on my knees / for my  
supplication / to construct kailasa temple / megalith / rock waists and throats are sometimes  
the same / apertures of caves / he calls my writing room a dungeon / of the voting booth / i  
usually vote in two different regions on the same day / a vote for him / a vote for me /  
weltanschauung / and our children vote for us in between / i had to submit a tax return twice /  
sometimes i have to pay more than i expect /  
/ the psychiatric hospital / she warned / i was only allowed to eat the pieces of pie that i made  
from the ingredients i bought myself / i couldn't understand why the girls committed  
themselves / medication on the trolley / for i don't even trust myself / dens instead of wards /  
my shadow comes into my room / she slips in between us while we sleep /  
/ she made me sleep for days / i was born a bear / a mandorla / access to the sky / lined blue / out  
of netting / cheese cloth / horus eyes and my mechanical eye / my old school was a dugout /  
narrow door / i felt like i was in a spaceship / cave belly button / darkless archive of pain / river  
in a celery stick / funded it with my own salary / i wonder if i will still believe my message  
of salvation when the sun blinks / eyelids when they sleep /  
/ i don't want to teach children anymore / a boy runs and yells around the room / wall to wall  
and bell to bell / because his mother is in heaven and his father is in hell / i met a man / we had to  
commit ourselves / our pogrom and our mercury retrograde / in pattern but then everything  
blanked out / i felt for my clothes / i remembered they were packed in his suitcase / he gave me  
his eyes / they were blue and shone like stars / i told him about daryl holton / lest we forget /  
answered / i do / i do /  
/ i have warned men before / for my house looks like a well / wall of gourds / door of our  
ephesian artemis / virgin huntress / he wanted to know my secret / ten and twenty dollar bills /  
splayed on a lectern / playing cards / doves or crows / i warned him / for my father stole them  
from me when i was young / // there is a curse // // and you will never forget //

## THE MONK AND THE KEY

*'At the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me'  
(Dan. 4:31)*

/ a giant old woman with a brown coat / she bends her back of bark / wind of grain / monkeys  
coming out of the trunk of a tree / bolognese brown / a snib / to make sure my rooms are locked /  
and the barrel of a gun / he gives me a feather / a pheasant or a kestrel / comforting color of  
coffee / an eagle over my head like unslept hair / my kolchakovka / when i walk away / white  
army of the snow / even though she had a crooked back she still nursed her child /  
/ beith tree / the first step is made of glass / an aquarium of rainbow fish / how they glisten  
like gold / i wore a brown robe / this is not caducity / beyond thanatophobia / i lit a paschal  
candle / for the conversio / sens monastique / nitya and moksha / i slice / longitudinal section /  
then cross / my father's body / muscle as red and salted as tribal rock / saint peter chanel  
racked and hacked with an axe /  
/ i had to preserve bits of myself in jars / pickled onions / placed them in a coiffure like a coffin /  
because noir comedy does make things soft / i filled a room with water and sank it into the sea /  
/ christ / covenant theophany / joseph and his k'tonet passim / daniel in the den / aslan outside  
the wardrobe / nebuchadnezzar went mad / my infelicity / for i cut the man's head clean off /  
celtic sword thrown into the sea / nuada / claiomh solais / quillon /  
/ their heart / a swing attached to vines / to knit them like the green attaches to more than one  
wall / twisted twigs / crown of spears / my son still cries over dead birds / my father used to  
do the same / my mother scorns us all / the monkey / envoy / christ and god / pieta covenant /  
for our mother / a jar on her knees / where her lap of water and jam /  
/ heart in ribs /  
/ apple in a basket /