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Katharine Rees

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## Coming Alive Again: A Prelude

by Kath Rees

Four in the morning and your eyes  
blot themselves into being.  
It isn't strange to wake up to the dark,  
anymore, to the unwelcome gift  
of the buses and their hinge-like complaints  
skating across, berating, a solid oil strip.  
a left, a shiver of metal  
shoulder reaching for shoulder  
a nudge, and "Blackbird"  
spills out from an ear.  
Time, and white noise  
for the taking.

Step out of the whale's mouth.  
Already, the trees of sunflowers,  
the shifting maple leaves  
have begun their root-born chant  
beneath the sidewalks,  
sipping  
to life, to life  
against  
the seas of rushing feet.

Can you forget your agony for a moment?  
Will you set aside the wasted years, the silent scales being weighed?

To hear, as the siren's belly fills  
unwanted spoons click-clacking  
like pens,  
a something  
to have in their hands  
is necessary,  
like it was for yours.

Under your nose,  
the shoes,  
feel new,  
Slapping pavement  
Echo  
Skip-  
ing  
through layers of flesh  
to the heart  
of the earth  
and back your  
heart  
is not a sound,  
anymore

It is a thing.

It swims  
It gives  
Only,  
an audible sigh  
a share in the collective rhythm.

It is not them who have decided  
It is not the world, that has suddenly become new,  
with a stutter of a groan  
a clumsiness of notes  
short-stopping-

It is your ribs like a door  
pried open  
to let the prosody wash where it will, scrape if  
it must,  
in the dust, the decision has been made:

I will listen, I will feel,  
I will speak.