



PROJECT MUSE®

Hammered Dulcimer

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WHAT THE WIND SAID
TO THE GIRL WHO WAS AFRAID

When he comes for you, that dark gentleman, fear,
tell him you already know him,
that you're not the foolish bride that he thinks,
that even in the crevices and chinks
of your own mind, things get carried away.
That you gaze into the arms
of trees, into a vacant night
where desire tears every dream apart.
That you walk on a path and hope it will stray.
That each twist from what's safe breaks a wish
like a curious seed
where the weeds of the wilderness mesh.
He can have the run of your house.
He can have the ruin of your grace.
He and the sadness that keeps circling nearer,
like a song you were born with and slowly remember,
like a song you were humming, and later divine.
That fine-limbed and bold as the delicate deer
on the gold hill at morning, whose legs turn to stone
at a sound, but who doesn't stop chewing the leaf
on its tongue while its body stands frozen, aware,
you believe in the constant infringement of pleasure.
You believe in the hill of your pleasure, not fear.
You too will not run. Your life will be moving
its teeth when he comes. He'll be bitten in half
while the wind in your spirit whips over the grass.
Oh how pure is that wind! It runs harder and faster
than death. It runs like a silvery fox,
like a flourish of foxes who don't have a doubt.
And you will push fear, that dark gentleman, out.