Canto

In the orchard
when you reached
your mother's hand
to pick
a blushing pear, or
her shoulder
tensed—you, searching
your bag for
something you need
down there
somewhere.
When you caught me
having gained
my father's
gait, voice-drop,
nose-prow, or
his weight:
new belongings!
—Such knowledge
like a body
we grow into,
bodies aging
into bodies
we knew.
No fading mansion
as Shakespeare says
our bodies
like our comprehension
one day will rise
like a foal on shaky legs
and look back
for its mother
gone already
to graze another
hill, to stand alone
in every kind of weather.
Is this how
we lose ourselves
to come together?
Perfection
cannot hide
in imperfection’s
change, nor eyes
like coals
increase without gain,
dark stars of knowing
without the questioning.
I see them kindle,
your eyes, in sleep’s
firmament
like clues to a future
unreadable until
looking away
I am less blind, more
quickly tuned
to the strain
I hope to find,
to outtrace, un-bind.
So Ta-Urt,
the hippo, lion, woman, croc
who devours
the dead
with encompassing
rendering maw
& tits drained
by endless providing
is submerged
on the papyrus
“painted over”
and cannot be
viewed directly
however I twist
to trace the vein
of ink on the trembling
dream leaf of the book—
though you can see
she holds the ankh
or is it a knife
she pulls from the sheath
approaching slipping
behind my vision for
the anti-aubade
I can't shake,
wrestling to wake
to escape, no
to embrace even
as I rouse:
hope, desire, belief, fear
in flesh refined,
in sleep
passing from age
to age faster
than we sense
the day stream past—
I feel her in
the male breast
softening, as female
lips darken
with garden shade,
her hot humus
breath an assurance
we share, uneasy
but undeniable (the bounty
given, given
back) who still
sleep alongside
each other
no longer so
opposite, a new
merging into
governing growth,
your shoulder now
with its singular mark
rising & falling
like a white feathered
shag on a swell, riding
the ebb tide, and below
the surface of things
another nourishment
where nothing’s
loosely spent, as
green becomes grain
becomes bread becomes
host; as wood
turns to flame
into light; as blossom
flowers into
crown—we plant
each other
in the one bed
and launch
through night
on a sea of milk.