

蝴蝶梦 Butterfly Dream

in a dream, i perform the butterfly concerto with the silhouette of a man
familiar, but not yet known.

in a dream, a white rabbit with a mouthful of jade approaches
and asks if i remember the story of how he found the moon.

i only hear the music, and i am swept away.

when zhuangzi dreamed he was a butterfly, did he want to stay ?

when he returned, was he fearful of living as the man he is after meeting another world ?

was he awestruck by the movement of things, the displacement of consciousness ?

this afternoon, i left my keys on the kitchen counter
and forgot my best friend's address.

pine trees shed their leaves.
wandering off, i followed a trail made of dust and gold.

i opened my arms to a fox made of jewels
and it leaned its chin against my shoulder.

we saw a vision of the sunset reversed;
time continued forward.

i stand before a mirror as mere mortal.
cracks in the wall stretch across yellow paint.

bottles of medicine remain behind cabinets unused,
no elixir, no change.

in the living room, the story of the rabbit recites itself in ink:
selflessness ignited over flame

the rabbit throwing his body forward
the jade emperor disguised as a poor man

rabbit sent to the moon with honor.

in a dream, zhunagzi plays the butterfly concerto with the silhouette of a woman
familiar, but not yet known.

in a dream, a woman tells him the story of how the rabbit found the moon,
how the fox became jewels, and the woman wrote of a story she is still too young to live—

how the music is the space between sleep and wake, a falling of piano keys, a falling of rain,

like wingbeat after wingbeat generations later,

generations more