

CATHY SONG

A PRAYER FOR MY MOTHER

A prayer for my mother
is a prayer for all beings
who lie in one bed or another,
restless and asleep,
chastised and praised,
blissful and awake—
hospice bed,
hotel bed,
homemade bed of lovelessness,
lumpy bed of childhood,
bed of paper, grass, and leaves.

A prayer for those who wait
in a state of grace,
graceful confusion,
a state of poise and dissolution,
arising and expanding
to the next set of conditions
I take responsibility for.

May my lives pass before me
in all their sensual splendor.

Remember with joy
loved ones found and lost,
the generosity of animals,
the cat that purred
comfort through soft fur,
the dog that took in
loneliness with patient affection.

Return with peace
to the houses

that sheltered me,
the friends who ate at my table,
the tables I sat at,
encouraged to take my fill.

Reenter the ocean
that swelled beneath me,
the river that pulsed through me,
the lake that calmed my mind.

Revisit the tree that shimmers
in my fondest dreams,
the bluff of rain and mist
becoming at the hour of choosing
my point of departure.

To the unrepeatable life,
the body that carried me
to this moment to be able
to ask forgiveness of those whose hearts
in ignorance I broke,
to love those who were hardest
to love, including myself,
I am grateful.

Goodbye, beautiful body of life.
All that has passed
prepares me for this unfolding
origination, embedded
at the coming into of existence.
Arising and expanding,
formless, accepting.
May I not waste
this crossing as a bridge.

Bridge of light
I cross with courage now.

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