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Poetry

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Poems by Katja Newberger

The Breaking Point

I said goodbye to
lazy summer days
sipping ice water in the shade
champagne conversations
a checkered picnic blanket by the brook
Crisp red berries and lush vanilla cream
tart-sweet familiar voices
rich caramel smiles.

I turned away from
Frumpish, humid heat
Swamp-heaviness of sticky temper
Insect phrases prickle sharp feet across
sensitive skin, provoking
Porcupine defensiveness
cumbersome swipe and slap
Hasty retreat, wounded pride

I gave up
Cool water over tender toes,
minnow-words nibbling at trickling moments
Silvery flashes, eddies and swirls
Honeyed sunshine on rose petal skin
Treacle slowness of contentment.

I closed the door on
Thundering black storms
Snarling winds gnashing hurricane teeth
Typhoon howls purging,
The rain on my pillow
Simple and salty, wicking easily
into soft cloud-fibers

I put it all aside for marching feet,
For brass horns,
The ruffles and flourishes of a call to arms.
Mummified in paper chains
Blank canvas
Inked by whatever I touched.
Touched me.

Bony hand grasping forward
squeezing, pieces of me forced through finger-gaps
Shapeless, formless
I was icy thought-storms,
Thundering streams,
Crashing summer days.
Topsy-turvy, upside and down.
Unrecognizable.

I took on the outline of whatever I touched.
Touched me.

I block the echo of marching feet
Step towards sunset stillness
Bare legs strong under
Swirling skirts,
Berry-print summer dress
Empty boots sag into muddy prints,
Unlaced, abandoned
As I dangle my tired toes in the cool water

Bittersweet

Ready or not, here I come!
Your yellow hair shone
faint freckles deepening
In the come-and-go sun
feet swift in velvet grass
you chased my shadow
Stifled giggles shook
close-woven branches
We wore our friendship
Like a favourite coat
Now hung in the closet
Outgrown

Path to Tomorrow

The richness of melancholy
rippling from lips
That shape goodbye
Pulling at spiderweb threads
Breaking bonds
Taking the first step
Pale foot bare
Against thick dark loam
Auburns and chestnuts
Rustling against untested skin
Freedom hurts sometimes
The prick of twig and thorn,
Shining blood stripes delicate canvas
But we are made to heal
Strapping on armor
Painting yesterdays on our soles
Until we walk with heads high
Over jagged rock and splintered bough
Rushing streams, and sizzling foam
Confident strides carrying us
Forward, farther, faster