

To Eve

by Robb Kunz

Lick this. A plum?
Not a plum but better

A pear--

A pipe wrench. A pencil.

This branch is unremarkable. It blossoms
And flowers. A pink you would love.

A green you would love also.

Eat this fruit. Smell it first. Open your senses.
That's it. Smell it. Eat it. Adam doesn't care.

What Adam does, among the willows, thigh deep in Spring
Bloom: He moans, ends up laconic. Sleeps like
A puzzle. Legs spread. Awash in his being
A man. Tell him who he is.

God dammit.

Give him a name.

II

Look, where I come from

Men are a scheme.

When, on the phone, they will mitigate
Damage--their children call from far away
To ask for a new curfew.

Their wives, riddled with cancer,
Will scream during the phone call--
They, the men, will tell you

To chill. It happens.

Their pain, overall
Is a bigger thing than any other pain.

Hold it. Don't define it.
Let it go.

III.

The third time she gets cancer
Your brother hands your mother a vape,
Weed filled,

She inhales. Your father watches.
Eyes alive--burning dark holes
Into the night.

How small the world is
Without wheat fields, a definite winter.

Your father watches for snow, aware,
For now, that May brings daffodils
But soon. Soon, no one will care about yellow.

IV.

Nothing good comes....
Nothing is good that comes.....
What is good comes....

Nothing good comes from nothing.

Nothing is good. Spread wide open.

What is good?

Nothing. Good.

He comes. Again. Still
Nothing from you. Spread wider
And let him feel your anger.

V.

I have watched you for days

Listfull among the animals. Scratching and petting.

They all seem to love you.

Now. To business.

Here is a fruit, to eat. Eat it.

Pretend afterward that I made you.

Tell God the serpent made you.

He beguiled.

It was a hard decision to be a mother.

But I made you do it.

Present Perfect
by Robb Kunz

*While Jacqueline Du Pre Plays-- Elgar: Cello Concerto in
E Minor, OP. 85: I. Adagio--Moderato*

I lied. About Joy.

Who believed me? The pearl cumberbands,
The lilies, roses? White is the color of mourning.
Of sacrifice. When I think purity, it's
pancakes just off the pan

Drowned in butter and jam, an egg, bacon. How
Bubbles on the batter tell you

It's done. Pancakes.

Now climb a tree. Stop remembering things
That don't exist.

This is the garden. Remember where you are.

The trees here always bloom. And your hope
Is alive elsewhere.

Robb Kunz hails from Teton Valley, Idaho. After receiving his MFA in creative writing from the University of Idaho, Robb returned to his parents' farm to cut grain and hay, fix fence, and hone his skills as a small-town barista. He currently teaches writing at Utah State University. Robb enjoys television, books, seltzer water, and cross-stitch.