



POEMS

Kellie Hay

Olives, Oil, & Bread

I found poetry
in anthropology
fashioning
what texts may mean

Once one arranges data's tales
only partial truths prevail

So be it

When is outside in?
Begin again;
others write in
speaking pens.

Who listens without
her own voice
telling the tale?

So frail,
our knowledge when
we start and stop
through our own lens.

Kinship, rhythm, rhyme—
bodies move in different
time.

And so do blood and borders

Different language games
shifting, contested lands
crying for rivers
dry seas dead
dying for olives, oil, and bread

On Becoming

Why do you think you are known
after only ten years?
Have you finished changing
breathing, imagining?

We can pass the immigration test

Let's see

I know what you take in your tea
your favorite

color

books

perfume

birds

songs

shoes

wine

crackers

brand of veggie burgers

I know . . .

you wish you could have an affair with Leonard Cohen

your most cherished dive restaurant

how you load the dishwasher

what makes you cry

How interesting

Shall I just take you for granted now?

We are dead once I know you

for what are we to become?

Peaceful Complexity

In another life,
if not the one before,
I may have walked with you,
unadorned,
with conscious categories
or settled comfort zones

With only a breath—
a walk within uncanny winds
feeling the strange serenity
there not knowing what to be
or expecting any outcome—
we keep moving

Water leaves no imprint,
as sacred as it is;
kindred spirits will no paths
when they meet their friends

All I can do is recognize you,
in this life,
my familiar/unfamiliar friend

Spicy Spaces

Something sensuous happens
when you get near my spice rack . . .

The smell of Jasmine tea,
cinnamon, hing,
cumin
you and me

In the twilight of our sunroom
I see your beauty
eyes closed
hands folded
I feel you breathing

Just then
right when
you fall asleep
I am
Awake, Awake, Awake