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. . . from *The Wilderness Papers*

Breeze,

Adam named the Presence in the grasses,

because it was one and many.

Eden

was not a creature Adam had been asked to name, and Adam

was *Adam* already.

Eve,

he named for the time she most drew him to her, her petals most opened

in the lessened light.

Evening,

he thought, *my evening*, and because he loved her, he created

a *thou*,

by which he meant

she belonged to him as his skin belonged.

He thought the work

was finished, until,

one evening *Breeze* stirred the grass, and Adam

was likewise stirred.

Heart,

he thought. He watched the grasses bow and part,

and he thought: *Thou*.

Few names

were needed, really. Though *God* was one, *father*

was not one yet.

God

seemed drawn to them each evening and each night seemed to be

drawn back

through a sieve

of darkness, leaving a gauze of stars that might have been

the skin of a face—

that soft,

to sift a tenderness over them. Each day's *dawn* seemed a bit

like a hunger

satisfied,
opening out into *canopy* and *birdsong* and fallen pieces of *sun*. It was simple.
And then, not . . .

Next, *angels*
appeared. Singular creatures, the *angels*, birds with faces and
fierce arms of *light*.

Later,
Adam thought that, at the start, there had been no tenses, but possibly
he was wrong.

After,
Eve asked, sighing, if *she'd* been the first; asked later, a *son* at her breast,
where ever again she would find

solitude,
and Adam turned, a *father* now, apart, to ask where now he would ever
find *solace*.

It was not simple:
they watched the son feed, speechless, and they called him *Cain*,
and in secret: *Greed*.

Eve had submitted
her new list of demands. *New. Demands. Cain*. Adam could not keep up.
And he only knew the half.

No going back.
God had grown a face and turned away. More and more closely they watched
their own faces

in each other's eyes.
The world had grown, too—larger, emptier. More and more often, evening
could not be borne.

Instead, *dreams*:

In his dreams she appeared as *dawn* and sometimes *food* and once *bird*
and often *wound*.

In his dreams
he called her still *my Evening* and *thou*, and on the best nights she seemed
a pod filled with . . .

silk? milk?

and brinked on bursting. Mornings, he simply got on with it, and sometimes
he thought it was *good*—

or *good enough*.

When he had nothing left to lose, he called her, for a time: *Breeze*.

But it didn't help.