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Two Sonnets

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TWO SONNETS

K. Laurel Balkema

ON THE PROGRESSION OF GRIEF

There is a quietness which comes from loss,
a sudden silence, as if the heart
had stopped its vital beating. Then across
the face there steals a sterile smile, apart
from grim reality, for very shock
makes us idiots unable to express
conceiveless grief. But slowly we take stock
of what is lost, and then cannot repress
the therapeutic tears which such chaos
and emptiness now stimulate. Erased
by salt is triviality and dross
on which we realize our lives were based;
our eyes are cleared to see past what is gone
and focus on the promise of the dawn.

AN AUTUMN FANTASY

An autumn master has created you
to be the fruitful, culminating crest
of harvest artistry. The shades he pressed
upon a palette were of golden hue—
from ripened wheat, from sea-washed sand, from fronds
of bronze and ochre ferns—to make your hair.
He blended tones of blue with utmost care—
the hazy azure sky and misty ponds
were brightened by the sapphire chicory—
to form your eyes. And as the pods of milk-
weed burst, he fused the pearly strands of silk
and tinged them pink with sumac red, to be
your skin. I ask, in humble, awesome mood,
but gleaner's measure of this plentitude.