In and Out of Cloud

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'each day new flowers' (1999)
'autumn sunshine' (2000)
James Hackett International Haiku Award
Highly Commended.

'returning home'
Presence #4, Editor's Choice

greasebanding the apple tree
I remember
my father's autumn

a robin sings
piercing the bright air-
frost

incoming tide
straightening
the tilted boats

long-haired old cat
on the windowsill:
early morning shade

surprised
by another year:
midnight fireworks

half-moon
pale clouds
deckled with silver

inside old railings
the new railings -
taller, sharper

a keen side-wind:
crows lift and float,
settle, and lift again

winter jay
wearing the spotted feather
my dead child gave me

below heavy cloud
lingering
stub end of a rainbow

scattering your ashes -
keeping back
some for the houseplants

potting a lavender plant
leaves heavy with scent -
spring thunder

sitting in zazen
wrapped in
the sound of rain

this nameless torrent
how its water
flows through me

each day new flowers
on the thrown away
chicory stem

March sunshine -
moment by moment
in and out of cloud

dusk honeysuckle scent

copper butterfly -
only the field maple
a brighter orange

January -
a dark morning
stippled with birdsong

pulling buttercups
the dark scent
of young mint

one last piece of cake:
everyone trying
not to look at it

dark sky, wet land
a wind scours
the clinging leaves

rings on the water:
the tufted duck
bobs up somewhere else

frozen tarn:
only half of it
holds a reflection

a single gull
trapezing
the offshore breeze

freezing asphalt
the tiny Chihuahua
lifts one paw then another

an empty house
nothing in the windows
but the sky

tiny mushrooms
unbending in the wind
that tumbles me

foam of pelt
spike of bone
winter carcase

a single
starship
thistledown

your visit
so unexpected
I forgot
all I wanted to say
until you left

returning home
I unlock
the quiet
of my life
alone

you have missed
the autumn flaming
of my cherry tree
by tomorrow
the leaves will be gone

long-distance
phone call:
your message
in the spaces
between words

you have not gone
although I close the door:
how the heart clings
even while spinning
towards the dark!

the anniversary
coming round again:
how will it feel this time
that sudden death
so many years ago?

here I am settled
into my winter:
your sunshine would only start
an untimely
flowering

an indulgence,
winter strawberries
then your news:
the familiar
taste of sadness

travelling together
I see only
your hands
on the wheel,
the way they are

in my life so much
severing
now even
small partings
unsettle me

HR 2001.