

three poems by KELLY MOFFETT

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IN THE FIRST INSTANCE

Today, a small rain, I'm under the turquoise umbrella that pops open with such a neat burst,

in the air three songs, another daisy. I am trying to be aware of the cloud above that tree, of how the hill steams, because I am cultivating an understanding of passion.

The story is a cornflower at the edge of a seeded field, a little dust on the dresser, a kind of bow that means something strong or holy is nearby. The story is a thousand black wings, a call to prayer, and in the center of the pavement, I am the person right beside the irregular crack.

In the distance, the old city walls, the beautiful cloister that holds every metaphor of you. Today, rain and if I could be any further away, I would become the outskirts. When did you become the altar in my castle? When did I become the rock spire?

In the clearing, more clearing. Not a sign anywhere of you.

SALT OR THE HERMIT MARRIAGE

Our tower is like the tower of a castle, too, and is typical. Or, rather *well earned*. Imagine years of wilderness. Each morning a half a loaf of bread, and, sometimes, a raven in the form of an old man. We've come so close, you might say, and you tell me to remember the date tree, the well, the kind of strength like salt that is singularly shaped and in art, sometimes clad in palm leaves.

Each day, another net cast to sea, another eating of what we drudge.

I do not want two lions to appear to help you dig my grave.
No matter how holy.

UNDERSTANDING LONGING

You asked: *have you touched the center of your own sorrow?*

So I peel it back, and see the room where you became my room:
where I spoke to you.

I said something about hearing and how it has no essential nature
of its own,
even as the bell sounding behind me seemed solid,

a texture of this world,

and my echoing voice made me for a moment think I was the ringing.

I wanted to squeeze through my mouth and fall into your lap.

Even then, I longed for you in this out-of-body way.

As I left, I repeated *I will not vanish*, but I vanished a little bit.

Now, at the monastery, you become the petal I pick.

I let you drift in the rain garden. I say goodbye.

Then: a residual neediness, as it is with all the stuff of life.