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HYMN TO ZEUS rk

Robert Kelly
Bard College

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HYMN TO ZEUS

**The flirtations of Zeus
have no boundary.**

**Lightning runs down the solitary tree,
fire loves the wood of it
we think, but in truth
fire loves this secret water
deep inside each thing.**

**The water hidden
in the crystals of steel,
water in the wood, sap rising
to meet Jupiter rushing down
to the water in us.**

II.

**That is Zeus.
Makes girls and boys out of everything
*his power makes us who we are***

**as once on Helicon
he seemed to take a fancy**

to a chubby little shepherd
ripe on the altar of puberty and
rushed down from heaven
to plant one scorching kiss on those rude lips
so ever after that young swain made
song whenever he tried to speak
so his plainest hello could
thrill the hearts of all the shepherdesses,

Genesis of poetry.

III.

“the swan was before we were married”
says Jove to Juno in Offenbach’s *Orphée aux Enfers*

history changes day by day —
no one knows what comes before

because feeling is always and only right now
and history has no heart to feel.

The Swan also is tomorrow.

IV.

Was there even time to answer them
before the air came down
— who made the air? —
to lock our snug atmosphere around us
safe so we could breathe?
But we weren't we yet,
we had to get born from crystals of air
— why a man has a chip of ice
deep in his every heart —
and learned to wrap a silk of skin
around a mass of air.
A net of blood to carry it.

It's a guess
to call our father's name.
Zeus gave us the weather,
ta metarsia
so let us praise Zeus.
Dia. Accusative case of God.
It's time for me to start
reading every book again.
For him if not for me.

V.

Me, I look out the window

I see the air.

What can be wrong with me

that I can see the air?

The outside calls

to the inside,

air inside me too

solemn as Tennyson

blood-journeying oxygen,

caravaning its way through the frail brain.

My hungry eyes, my hungry eyes.

VI.

Hymn to Zeus.

He sees us when he looks down

when we do something

worth his notice,

some offering or some public iniquity—

the beauty of Zeus is this:

he does not know what we're thinking.

**And all the forms Zeus takes
rejuvenate the human race —**

**the swan of our grace, the gold
in the mercy of our eyes,
our eagle wit — he pours
the beast-god stuff in,
our genome rises to adore.**