

BARE

I am Cro Magnon woman
Covered with hair
In all the wrong places
A Winter's worth of neglect
Or insulation
Another layer
of protection
I wonder if the brand new razor
I was given as part of a gift pack
At some cheap hotel somewhere
In South Dakota
To make up for a price that was too high
And a "smoking room" that wasn't
Was some sort of irregular reject
That was too dull for a reason
It was an irregular season
To visit Mount Rushmore
And the rain poured down
Giving Lincoln's brow
A thorny crown
Of tears
I wonder why I never inherited
My mother's pure alabaster skin
Bare
Not a hair to pluck anywhere
Between the brow line
Or within
On the legs
Or under the arms
A smooth line
That belied original sin
Eight kids
And two lost
Is that the cost
And why does there have to be one
I have become a cave woman
I get tired before it is night
And night used to mean 2 a.m.
That is how long it took
Before my mind ceased to spin
But now I find myself
Nodding off just like she does

In the middle of a favorite show
As if I have any
In the middle of a Pulitzer Prize winning book
As if I finish any
And I remember a poem I once wrote
About how the old cling to the light
They sleep in fits and starts
And wake at the crack of dawn
After sleeping their whole life long
And they can't understand why they can't sleep
Anymore
It must be the coffee or the tea
Or chocolate
It makes their gut rot
But their brains hum
With some singular pleasure
Long ago forgot
Some sensory measure
Of all the love they've lost
And I know what Dylan spoke of
When he invoked the curse
And the blessing of rage
It can kill you
And revive you
And prove you're still alive
And so I am bare
Almost
I see the sun rise
More often
Than I see it set
Is this so I won't forget?
All the lifetimes lived
On this green Earth
All the promises made
And kept
Without a word being spoken
Or a finger being crossed
Because if I loved you once
My love is never lost
And I will never disrespect you
Although it may seem I neglect you
I am waiting for you to move on
Just like I need to do
A thousand years from now
I know you will remember me
And I remember you