From "The Wilderness Papers"

Marjorie Stelmach

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... from The Wilderness Papers

Breeze,
Adam named the Presence in the grasses,
because it was one and many.

Eden
was not a creature Adam had been asked to name, and Adam
was Adam already.

Eve,
he named for the time she most drew him to her, her petals most opened
in the lessened light.

Evening,
he thought, my evening, and because he loved her, he created
a thou,
by which he meant
she belonged to him as his skin belonged.
He thought the work
was finished, until,
one evening Breeze stirred the grass, and Adam
was likewise stirred.

Heart,
he thought. He watched the grasses bow and part,
and he thought: Thou.

Few names
were needed, really. Though God was one, father
was not one yet.

God
seemed drawn to them each evening and each night seemed to be
drawn back
through a sieve
of darkness, leaving a gauze of stars that might have been
the skin of a face—
that soft,
to sift a tenderness over them. Each day’s dawn seemed a bit
like a hunger
satisfied,
opening out into canopy and birdsong and fallen pieces of sun. It was simple.
And then, not...

Next, angels
appeared. Singular creatures, the angels, birds with faces and
fierce arms of light.

Later,
Adam thought that, at the start, there had been no tenses, but possibly
he was wrong.

After,
Eve asked, sighing, if she’d been the first; asked later, a son at her breast,
where ever again she would find
solitude,
and Adam turned, a father now, apart, to ask where now he would ever
find solace.

It was not simple:
they watched the son feed, speechless, and they called him Cain,
and in secret: Greed.

Eve had submitted
her new list of demands. New. Demands. Cain. Adam could not keep up.
And he only knew the half.

No going back.
God had grown a face and turned away. More and more closely they watched
their own faces
in each other’s eyes.
The world had grown, too—larger, emptier. More and more often, evening
could not be borne.
Instead, *dreams*:
In his dreams she appeared as *dawn* and sometimes *food* and once *bird* and often *wound*.

In his dreams
he called her still *my Evening* and *thou*, and on the best nights she seemed
a pod filled with . . .
silk? milk?
and brinded on bursting. Mornings, he simply got on with it, and sometimes
he thought it was *good*—
or *good enough*.
When he had nothing left to lose, he called her, for a time: *Breeze*.

But it didn’t help.