

I Have Learned 5 Things

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1. The sulfurous flame
 sunbeams in corners
 lightning like cracked glass
 the bulb of an idea
 your dark eyes
all
have one source.
2. Pain is truer than people
 truer than a full plate
 truer than God.
3. Joy is a suitcase
 packed with everyday things
 no beaded gowns, no hats
 no umbrella
 just pajamas, a toothbrush, sneakers.
 If it rains
 stand there
 soak up every drop
 like applause.
4. I have learned that I want less:
 the sound of lake water lapping
 tadpoles listless in sun-heated shallows
 wispy grass, knobby reeds
 greeting me, my name
 caught in their raspy throats
 one or two clouds
 and a bird, maybe,
 if it doesn't sing.

5. Old age is where you started,
a child
looking up at the light
at jumbled faces
at mouths whispering, "there, now,
go back to sleep."