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**Poem XXXV**  
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## Ruth Behar

### POEM XXXV

I thought I would never hear a bird sing again. I thought the trees would forget how to grow leaves. The winter was too long. Too silent. The house fell dark and I could no longer tell the day from the night. I was certain our love had died. I wept and wept. I filled a box with my tears. They shone like pearls that once knew how to swim in the ocean.

Today all the windows are open. Since dawn the birds have been singing deliriously. The trees have turned crazy green. I can smell the flowers in my garden yielding their honey to the bees.

I never wanted a garden—

I did not plant the flowers, I do not know the names of the birds or the trees, yet their wild pleasure is not withheld from me.

How fortunate is the world that it does not depend on my will. How fortunate am I that you keep watering the stem of our love, even when it withers, even when it has nothing to give.