OF SAP AND TEARS

Diane Hale

I.

I sit in the woods and watch the stream admiring the trees as they ripple and flow Waves sweep us in, lulled into dream-sleep, carrying us away content to settle beneath the gentle caress certain to end as we began

II.

I listen,

voice-bodies walk by (I ripple and flow with the trees) They do not see me those on the road beyond gazing down at the dirtinto the ground-through the earth to the other side of the moon, as if answers lie in darkness They pass by fixed in soiled thoughts unaware of the forest's voice the confusion of their black thoughts screaming too loud to hear its whisper blind to brilliance reflected on red-golden leaves, (the brown-yellowed shield barely allows

the honey to drip down upon those fallen, hidden in the webbed silence) Yet do I realize its presence bow down to it recite my hymns of praise

III.

The sun rests its hand upon the open leaves of a magical book and scarce need the breeze brush by to send the bound work streaming, the black, streaking (slowing, we reach into a bank of silver-black, cradles gently in the stream's arms it follows us away)

IV.

A young man walks, foot-falls one after another From my gentle carriage I plead—look! Stop and join the journey to have these moments

with unknown endings

His thoughts blind him protectors of a vision

perhaps he could not bear

"How little you know

this soft mother, this fluid compassion! Silence the mind warriors . . ." (but you cannot see and I move tranquilly on cradled in the arms of my mother

who carried away the bank, whose lullaby rocks the trees to sleep)

v.

Too soon she reaches my beginning the sun pulls on his tattered cloak, the eccentric lover that can stay no longer, and hastens away with ragged ends flowing Stream and wood modestly clothe themselves faces darkened. ashamed of the sun's extravaganceof the naked radiance they flauntedthat he had glorified and shown with silent pride to those of the wood that could not but watch How unlike the sap of trees are my tears! It is the sun that soothes them and bids them weepproudly glistening in their sorrow I weep at his leaving, fearing my own shrieking thoughts in chaotic darkness. I cling to his cloakbrazen even in my darkened robes But as I rave, the stream chants softly to me-"come tomorrow, come tomorrow and perhaps you will understand He leaves-but is the constant lover-I sooth by his touch his warmth inspires my compassion Go from the woodthe night's chill is on and your robes have less substance than oursour textures are those of many more years

I send you away, but love, come tomorrow."

VI.

A glow remains still— I sit in the wood watching the wood and stream Somewhere, far-off, a young man crys out Softly I whisper, "Come tomorrow, my love, come tomorrow,"

UNTITLED

Alice Monds

He took an old Barlow knife from his pocket and eased into the cane bottom chair, tipping it back on two legs against the low stone fence. Methodically, he drew the gleaming blade across a fragrant block of red and yellow cedar. His gnarled, weathered hands moved deftly. He worked intently for some time, honing the block to a soft roundness and piling thin light curls of cedar around his feet. He peered at his companion from singular eyes set below incredibly unmanageable gray brows.

"Mighty fine shavins, ain't they?"

The boy nodded in agreement.

"Knew a feller once," the old man said, "won a whittlin' contest. Took a big kitchen match and made such fine curled shavins, he had