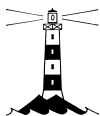


**Eileen  
Myles**

**I must be  
living twice**

**new and selected poems 1975–2014**



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## WHAT TREE AM I WAITING

That whole part of the world  
where I won't go any-  
more  
that whole separation  
that I won't feel  
high in this house  
in this hemisphere  
in this artificial light  
that is artificial  
in the earliest morning; dark  
in pages and pens  
in an unfamiliar bed  
in the foot curl  
furniture  
each rumble  
when morning comes  
and it's still morning  
and it's still night  
I married a dead girl  
we were born in her  
bloom  
remember that fat bumblebee  
landed on a lamp  
I opened the doors  
and I forgot and the house  
got colder and colder  
where is this house  
the seam between boards  
merely gains my attention  
it's dark and thin  
I monitor each situation  
my bladder growing full  
climb down climb up  
what tree am I waiting

my whole life in weather  
waiting for my raft  
I'll fly to another island  
I'll take a train  
already I know  
it will hurt  
this is the hurt country  
I came here  
to hold the hurt like a bird  
like a tree  
traffic has rings  
we watch it whirl around  
damaging our night  
great continents hold  
the feelings and the ages  
what is mine  
going blind  
great masses of them  
not going home  
the country drew a line  
because of memory  
one said  
I feel my heart race ahead  
in eternity there is this ache  
there is this wakefulness

## SUMMER

That morning in the light  
that television show got born  
I remember it in California  
every morning a show  
and her wife in bed  
do I like her being there  
but I have this now  
my pride and my telephone  
and all my information

## PROPHECY

I'm playing with the devil's cock  
it's like a crayon  
it's like a fat burnt crayon  
I'm writing a poem with it  
I'm writing that down  
all that rattling heat in this room  
I'm using that  
I'm using that tingling rattle  
that light in the middle of the room  
it's my host  
I've always been afraid of you  
scared you're god and something else  
I'm afraid when you're yellow  
tawny  
white it's okay. Transparent cool  
you don't look like home  
my belly is homeless  
flopping over the waist of my jeans like an omelette  
there better be something about feeling fat  
what there really is is a lack of emptiness  
I'm aiming for that empty feeling  
going to get some of that  
and then I'll be back

## LONDON EXCHANGE

I have utmost  
respect for you  
but in that  
moment if I  
were to  
get out of  
your way  
instead of  
walking up the stairs  
to my home  
I would have  
no respect  
for myself.  
I didn't know  
why you couldn't  
understand this  
when I told  
you. Instead  
you screamed  
at me and  
told me I  
was rude. And  
then you  
said someone  
of my  
age should  
know meaning  
that you  
were adding  
to my crime  
the fact  
that I am

older than you.  
What am I  
to do. How  
many days  
have passed  
and I  
have no  
reason to think  
that  
your ancestors  
were stolen  
from their  
home in A-  
frica  
and because  
of my not  
knowing that this  
is true  
but thinking  
that it  
is possible  
it makes  
me certain  
that respect  
next time  
would be  
for me  
to step around.  
Maybe  
I could say  
quietly joining you  
for a moment  
in your



vast and  
ancient  
sorrow  
that was  
my home

## MY DEVIL

before the sky  
opens &  
I drop my  
tiny ladder  
I will inhabit  
the minds  
of dogs  
& try me on  
for size  
I will lean  
against the side  
of the bldg.  
& smoke my  
blonde smoke  
I will be  
Inside my  
big car  
something happens  
that's what  
I say  
there's always  
a recipe  
I will recite  
My blonde  
list  
I am  
the negation  
of you  
spell's on  
they're reeling us  
in  
I want her  
thoughts  
These cattle

are mine  
the salad's  
not bad  
The devil is  
Turning into ev-  
eryone  
I'm you for  
a while. Genitals  
itchy. That's  
me. I'm going  
to ruin  
your corn  
it's not such  
a bad idea.  
Give me that  
poem. Give  
me that menu  
give me  
key  
I don't  
need to  
come or go  
I'm there  
In your prayer.  
Mr. President  
consider the  
wish of the  
tiny child.  
he is me.  
does it taste good  
or does it look  
like it tastes good  
you don't know.  
See.

## MEMORY

I lost it  
that soft  
ball I threw  
in my room  
across  
many walls  
because  
I love toys.

It warmed  
to my grip  
became dirty  
went splat  
and I threw  
it against  
the writing  
on the wall  
not hitting  
it exactly  
but with  
a smile  
went  
out the door  
to rise over  
golden hills  
and descend  
with a family  
on a tram  
ride through  
graves  
you irreplace-  
able  
the best  
thing I had