

# Spillway

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*Spillway*



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*A teacher gives a student a glass of water and tells the student to dance. The student goes and dances and, after a few minutes, comes back to the teacher and says, "It's hard to dance without spilling the water." The teacher laughs and says, "Who said you shouldn't spill the water?"*

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**Dripping Springs Garden**

White plastic pails smeared purple with blueberry  
Hang low and heavy from our waist belts.  
This one with its snaggletoothed lip reminds me  
Of a piranha. The way it gnashes at my thigh.  
Tawny limbs, more shagbark hickory than legs,  
Steadying me on the sloping ground.  
In this air you look like a god. Your lithe body  
Pushing deeper into the tangle. Sun so bright  
It turns the whole sky golden.  
Dripping Springs, Arkansas. Harvesting berries.  
This is how we start. Not with hard things—  
Betrayal, lies, abandonment—  
But with the firmness of ripened fruit. Perfect.  
Messy. A cluster of playful promises ready for picking.  
I take one between my thumb and palm, coax it  
Gently off the branch. Feel its supple gray-blue skin resist  
The pressure of soft flesh as I press it against my palate.  
This is how we begin. Small. Tart. Surprising.  
Teeming with a sweetness fuller than any  
Hoped-for future might bring.  
If only love were this easy. This insistent in its ends.  
We could cling to the undersides of its branches  
Indefinitely. Fill our pails again and again  
In our innocence. Shameless joy our only stain.

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