

**After Leslie: Variations on Love:**

For Cathy

The question – afterward –  
is what to do with love –  
because love begun  
must go somewhere.  
Love begun must increase.

Or the question – the first one –  
is how could this be so: murder?

How can life suddenly  
irrevocably – end?

Or the question is  
did God or Jesus cover her,  
so that she felt nothing?

The question is  
what were you doing,  
exactly then?

The question is what to do with  
love – because you've carried it  
so many years it's embedded  
in your bones, knitted there,  
in cartilage, also. You do not breathe,  
do not see,  
without some of that breath,  
that sight, being also for her –  
wherever she is;  
only she isn't, now,  
so where does that love go?

Where *is* she –  
bright smile, long legs,  
just-beginning-her-life-dancer  
that she was?  
In the ground is not enough.

The question is  
this morning  
and the whole day after it:  
how to use it –  
such a utilitarian word –  
but you have the morning, the day  
and she doesn't  
so what will you make of it?

The question is  
how, like Jacob,  
you'll insist the angel bless you,  
not let go  
absent a blessing.  
What is the blessing?  
What continues in her name?

The question is how to enter grief  
and be torn into nothing  
and yet be whole.  
How to look into the abyss  
and choose to turn.

The question is  
what is the life that is left?  
For the one who murdered:  
what is possible for him?  
Not that your primary caring  
is for him,  
but you have some remaining,  
and offer it.

There is no waking from a dream.  
This is not a hallucination.  
The question – always the question – is  
what does love do, now?

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