

## Ribbon Bows

Joanna Newsom

There is a spring, not far from here,  
The water runs both sweet and clear--  
both sweet and clear, and cold:  
could crack your bones  
with veins of gold.

I stood, a-wagging, at the tap;  
just a-waiting on the lagging, rising sap.  
I held the cold tin ladle to my lip.  
At the Shrine of the Thousand Arms,  
I lowered my eyes to sip.

What a beautiful day to catch my drift,  
or be caught up in it.  
You want your love, Love?  
Come and get your love;  
I only took it back  
because I thought you didn't.

How my ears did ring,  
at the municipal pound,  
from that old hangdog  
to which I was bound:  
curled 'round the bottom rung--  
doesn't anybody want you?  
Well, come on, darlin.  
I could use someone like you around.  
I am not like you, I ain't from this place.  
And I do reserve the right  
to repeat all my same mistakes.  
And, in the night, like you,  
I certainly bite and chew  
what I can find,  
and never seem to lose the taste.

What a horrible face I feel me make--  
For Pete's sake,  
what you have told me, I cannot erase!--  
(Though I keep on saying,  
and I do believe, it is not too late).

All day, you're hassling me with trifles:  
black nose of the dog, as cold as a rifle,  
indicating, with a nudge,  
God, No God. God, No God.  
Sweet, appraising eye of the dog,  
blink once if god,  
twice if no god.

My mama may be ashamed of me,  
with all of my finery:  
carrying on,  
whooping it up till the early morn,  
lost and lorn,  
among the madding revelry!  
Sure, I can pass.  
Honey, I can pass.

Particularly when I start to tip my glass.  
I'll be a sport,  
and have a go at that old song,  
singing unabashed, about  
"Them city girls,  
with their ribbon bows,  
and their fancy sash..."

But, though I get so sad  
(could swear the night  
makes a motion to claim me,  
around that second verse),  
I reckon I've felt worse,  
and still held fast.  
But, later on, when I am alone,  
alone at last,  
then I take my god to task.  
I take my god to task.