



Smith Blue (Crab Orchard Series in Poetry)

Camille T. Dungy

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In *Smith Blue*, Camille T. Dungy offers a survival guide for the modern heart as she takes on twenty-first-century questions of love, loss, and nature. From a myriad of lenses, these poems examine the human capability for perseverance in the wake of heartbreak; the loss of beloved heroes and landscapes; and our determination in the face of everyday struggles. Dungy explores the dual nature of our presence on the planet, juxtaposing the devastation caused by human habitation with our own vulnerability to the capricious whims of our environment. In doing so, she reveals with fury and tenderness the countless ways in which we both create and are victims of catastrophe.

This searing collection delves into the most intimate transformations wrought by our ever-shifting personal, cultural, and physical terrains, each fraught with both disillusionment and hope. In the end, Dungy demonstrates how we are all intertwined, regardless of race or species, living and loving as best we are able in the shadows of both man-made and natural follies.

Flight

It is the day after the leaves, when buckeyes,
like a thousand thousand pendulums, clock trees,
and squirrels, fat in their winter fur, chuckle hours,
chortle days. It is the time for the parting of our ways.

You slid into the summer of my sleeping, crept
into my lonely hours, ate the music of my dreams.
You filled yourself with the treated sweet I offered,
then shut your rolling eyes and stole my sleep.

Came morning and me awake. Came morning.

Awake, I walked twelve miles to the six-gun shop.

On the way there I saw a bird-of-prayer all furled up by the river.

I called to it. It would not unfold. On the way home I killed it.

It is the time of the waking cold, when buckeyes,

like a thousand thousand metronomes, tock time,

and you, fat on my summer sleep, titter toward me,

walk away. It is the time for the parting of our days.

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Garnet Veach:

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