

Jamie O'Halloran

WEEK MINUS ONE

-- *after* David's Little Indian
by Margaret Wise Brown

Day of the moon in the sky

Some confectioner's thumb
Prints the bottomless cup of sky
Blue as . . . , blue as

The cornflower is bachelor's
Button, mood indigo.

Some gardener's thumb
Presses a bright seed
Far as . . . , far as

Day before I met you

Was like the day after
If you don't consider the chair,
How it remembers your

Body, the
Sun it left to sit.

Day of the tall cool trees

Wood rain.

Water leaf.

Summer inside out.

Day of the birds flying away

Late letters flapping
V's and double-v's yawn
Into the next season.

The sun is moving away.

Day of the little blue dish

Cat's tongue no
Ladle, but a sponge.

Another animal lives
In its mouth.

The day turning upside
Down fills my skin

With sky. My eyes shoot
Clouds like skeet.

What animal lives
In my mouth?

Day the fire burned like feathers speaking

Pinion-mouthed with scattling
Pine.

Ashes, ashes.

Bird-of-heart out-of-flying
Into the hand.

Rest, rest.

THE LOTUS OF LI SHIH-TA

The oldest leaf swings wide,
Feminine door, locus

Of liquid bone, sweet ink.
Blossoms of no color.

Kite string of stem holds
The flower to the lake bottom

Of earth. The unopened
Careen toward heaven.

ANNIVERSARY

The stars all are different
Where you are.

Cassiopea sits on her head,
Snow whitens July.

One August we watched for meteors
And fell with the stars into sleep.

Do the stars fall over your chosen country,
The land of our married dream?

Do you follow them
With your acquired family,

The beloveds replacing me?
I cannot track the path you take

And barely remember your face,
Its bearing eclipsed by the sun.