

CARMINE SPILT

Beneath the wisteria I knelt to burnish what remains—
each scene revised until the blood became mere carmine spilt
from painter's brush, the wound a clasp of damascene
metalwork, ornamental. In that garden you said
“I cannot bear to look at you”, and I have planted
something flowering over it, white petals
where the words were. Your hands shook
holding the blue bowl. I have made them still.

The mind saves what the heart cannot endure:
I've restitched the hours, altered every name.
See how the tree grows backward into seed?
How the fruit remembers itself into blossom,
blossom into bud, the ground exhaling roots?

I have made you softer—not the hawk's stoop
but the dove's slow arc. Not the scream
but its echo, already fading into evening.

The past becomes a painting: every figure
crowned and distant, every gesture slowed
to grace. I carry this, a gorgeous fiction
where I wander blameless. But the bowl—

The blue bowl will not disappear. It sits
in every version, central, unrevised.
Your hands around it. Shaking. The garden
holding its breath before the breaking.

