

PAIN by William McKee

One summer day the wind blew hard.
It bent branches.
Leaves were scattered by its fury.
Flowers were bruised and broken.
The wind broke the stem of one of my roses.
Limp and hurt hung my rose.
its falling petals were teardrops of pain.

I said to the rose: the wind has bent you.
It has broken your stem.
Your petals fall.
Tell me, rose,
why must you lose your lovely petals?
why must your beauty fade?

The rose answered:
When the wind broke my stem, I was sad.
I knew my petals would fall.
I knew my beauty would soon fade.
I called to the rose maker.
I said, rose maker, why must I be bruised and broken?
I have joy to share.
I have beauty to give.

Rose, did the rose maker answer you?

Little rose, said he, listen well.
Before I built the stars,
Before I put light into the sun,
Before I made the land and its waters,
The thought was in my mind of making you.
You were in my mind a billion years and more,
before you came to be.
Then I made you.

My plan for you was that you would give an exact measure of joy.
Only a certain measure of beauty.
And have your measure of pain.

Rose maker, why the pain?
Am I your enemy?

You are not my enemy,
You are my friend,
Your pain does not come from my little love of you.
It comes from within you, and it comes from me.

How, rose maker?

You are not perfect.
You have needs
You need water
You need soil
You need sun
Your needs make you imperfect.
By yourself you cannot stand.
Did not the wind prove that to you?

Yes, rose maker, the wind proved that.
And I see that I am not perfect.
But is there not more to say?
Surely my flaws and my needs are not as great as my pain.

There is more.
I have a plan.
It is a loving plan.
It is a plan for all roses.

What is that plan?

It is a plan of pain.
Carefully do I weigh pain on my scales.
When I release pain it is only where I know it will or can awaken love.
Never do I release it where it cannot be well received.

There is more, rose, there is much more than this.
I speak of my mystery.
If you solved my mystery,
If you knew my secret,
You would be the rose maker.

But why must there be mystery?

Because, if you knew all you would not have to trust me.
You would not have to trust my love.
You could go away from me.
And I do not want you to go away.
I want to keep you near because I love you.
Because I love you I permit pain.

Sir, that is what the rose maker told me.
I believe him.
Because he is good.
He is Wise.
He is God.