

NAOMI REPLANSKY / THIRTEEN POEMS

RING SONG

. . . When that joy is gone for good
I move the arms beneath the blood.

When my blood is running wild
I sew the clothing of a child.

When that child is never born
I lean my breast against a thorn.

When the thorn brings no reprieve
I rise and live, I rise and live.

When I live from hand to hand
Nude in the marketplace I stand.

When I stand and am not sold
I build a fire against the cold.

When the cold comes creeping round
I seek a warmer stamping-ground.

When that ground becomes too small
I come against a stony wall.

When that wall is not to climb
I chalk on it a burning rhyme.

When the rhyme can work no spell
I know the circle of my hell.

When my hell does not destroy
I leap from ambush on my joy . . .