

When the Time Comes

There were nights too when only a radish
lit up the room. I wanted you with me.

I pressed my face to the window
and acres of corn pressed back.

The company was dazzling:
ants, beekeepers, dignitaries

a legion of tiny gowns spinning
like parachutes in a hazy ballroom.

It went on like this for years.
I made room for you in bed.

I authored entire encyclopedias
devoted to foreplay. For example,

train tracks in the moonlight are a kind of zipper,
history has its way with us. Forgive me.

I spent too much time thinking,
I mean drinking.

If you see another way, I'll listen.
I never liked sleeping.

I know when the time comes
I'll take my body off like a hat

drift out past slatted houses
with one light still burning

past trees nodding at the river's edge
and all those small farms and field mice.

I'll come back to you. I'll come back
like a little girl up reading a book

She drops an eyelash on each page.
She makes a wish and listens for morning.
I'll come back like her.