When Buds Burst
(March 19, 2015)

Of course it hurts when buds burst.
Otherwise why would spring hesitate?
Why would all our fervent longing
be bound in the frozen bitter haze?
The bud was the casing all winter.
What is this new thing, which consumes and bursts?
Of course it hurts when buds burst,
pain for that which grows and for that which envelops.

Of course it is hard when drops fall.
Trembling with fear they hang heavy,
clammer on the branch, swell and slide -
the weight pulls them down, how they cling.
Hard to be uncertain, afraid and divided,
hard to feel the deep pulling and calling,
yet sit there and just quiver -
hard to want to stay and to want to fall.

More than a little of me wants Swedish poet Karin Boye’s poem to stop right here.
- I want somehow to make permanent my appreciation for the pain in all possibilities.
- I want somehow to keep fresh forever the fear we feel before every letting go.

What I really want, undoubtedly, is to make humanity’s longest-sought bargain with
time’s keeper – to seize an eternity, poised on the edge of pain and fear, in trade for the
evanescence of the days now beckoning us forward.

Time's keeper, though, says again: “No deal.” And Boye's lines continue:

Then, at the point of agony and when all is beyond help,
the tree's buds burst as if in jubilation,
then, when fear no longer exists,
the branch's drops tumble in a shimmer,
forgetting that they were afraid of the new,
forgetting that they were fearful of the journey -
feeling for a second their greatest security,
resting in the trust that creates the world.

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