

## **I praise unsalted butter**

it is cheap for the price  
and pearl buttons which keep  
all the secrets, translucent  
parings from babies fingernails.  
And the danger of color. Dare  
to enter delphinium's cobalt—  
I will wait at the gate and hope  
for your return. And this is just  
here and now. What about  
the Assyrians, their white colts  
and amber bracelets, the frogs  
that rained down on Leicester,  
Massachusetts in 1953. What about  
nipples and contrails, gold lamé,  
branching dendrites you will  
never see. What about that bright  
planet that does a little jig  
when you look at it. Yes, I know  
there's more. There will always be  
the thin Vietnamese girl, arms  
flung out, running naked down  
the end of the world. I am not  
strong enough for that, so I must  
praise spores and otter dung,  
kaleidoscopes and saliva,  
Fritz Nielsen, a bearded man  
who spends his time in tops of trees  
in the Amazonian rain forest.  
They all want in—freckles,  
the Sangre de Cristo mountains,  
burnt sugar, the tall Maasi woman  
who yelled at me, the pale  
honey-colored toes of mice.  
If I could spend my life  
praising I would choose to die  
with *rhubarb* on my lips—it closes  
with a piercing but opens with  
the spirit's breath.

by Sharron Singleton