

The Blind Leading the Blind

after Louise Bourgeois

Fingers stretched and pointed
like the stilled needles of compasses
how we tip through the surface of the world.

Like boatsmen summoning sea legs
or children

we muster balance

then stop briefly

to rest on one another

before moving steadily on.

I don't know where we're going

or how to imagine a straight line.

Sometimes I think this so loudly

that I believe

I can feel you hearing me.

I once believed in hidden forces,

in the grim curses of Furies

who did not want us to exist.

A struggle halted half-way through

that made us irreconcilable

like this.

In missteps, with sharp edges

we wound each other and ourselves but have learned, painfully,

that there is no better direction.

So what should we be besides obstinate?

As for pity or grief over the ever-unexperienced –

I want to tell you

There are so many ways of apprehending.

I want to tell you

that there is something incredible here
and we cannot describe or explain it
even to ourselves –
an unending wonderment,
questions innumerable as the impossible stars
whose pale hues
we will never encounter, not even in dreams.
I don't know what time of day it is now, or what they mean when they say
the color of love.

There are so many facets
of this embellished world
that I know nothing about.
Still, let us remain like this,
unfinished,
paused in a passing symmetry,
a momentary order
in which we judge our proximity to fire
by the intensity of heat,
the fullness of vessels
by a liquid's sound
and the nearness of bodies by how air moves
through the illimitable dark.