

## Gethsemane

I want to tell the story. But—  
there is no approaching this,  
strange crux  
of everything.

Come at it sideways.  
Come at it from the edge.

Picture, then,  
a hardscrabble patch of land.  
Rocks. An olive tree. Sparse,  
straggling desert grass. The rocks

have been waiting. The wind  
has been waiting. The living souls nearby  
sleep through the whole thing.  
(This is important. I have slept  
through many things.)

And then—  
What

can be known? There has never been  
any moment more private  
nor more public.

So.

What I know: the screaming windy cliff  
of unavoidable onus, the weight  
of what must be done.

For me, it was the abyss  
of being about to give birth. The way  
the self shrinks  
to a pinpoint in a vacuum, the way  
one becomes lost, faceless,

the way  
the thought that there is another soul depending on you  
can pull you inside out and through  
to a new place.

But of course  
even in that, my most impossible moment,  
he was already there,  
having been there before me.

Oh, how is a human  
to comprehend godly heartbreak?  
Might as well teach a point on a line  
about temples and spires,  
about stars. It's a matter of dimension:  
impossible geometry.

What we know:  
he went to a place.  
He knew that ahead of him  
was a pain yet unknown in the world,  
extra-dimensional. That  
seeing it, he, who had maybe  
never known fear before this,  
asked to be excused,  
but not really.

We know:  
the contemplation of that pain  
was so terrible it required the ministrations  
of an angel before it could be approached.

We know:  
at point zero  
he was left alone  
in a way no human can comprehend.

We know:  
he came out on the other side  
gentle, generous,  
quieter.

Forever after,  
he would say very little about it.  
Only: *shrink*.  
Only: *nevertheless*.

—Darlene Young