

The page is filled with delicate pencil sketches of nature. At the top, there's a tall, thin plant with several small flowers. To its right is a branch with small, dense flowers. Below these are several other plant sketches, including one with large, pointed leaves and another with small, clustered flowers. In the lower half, there are sketches of animals: a small rabbit, a deer, and a squirrel. A small bird is also depicted in flight. At the bottom, there's a decorative wreath-like sketch. The text 'NATURE' and 'POEMS' are written in a stylized, cursive font and underlined. The word 'Epilobe Velu' is written in a smaller, simpler font above 'POEMS'.

NATURE

Epilobe Velu

POEMS

i. Fall Cleaning

I saw a Spider cleaning house,  
the first time I passed this place.

The web was  
stretched  
in a thicket,  
mid-air apartment;  
plenty of space  
to be a spider.

but autumn kept dropping her artistry  
in the living room.

She means no harm,  
she just so happens to be obsessed with  
her work:  
and things Fall.

The spider delicately considered  
the thin, papery mess,

and the tiger inside our hearts. Raging.  
To live in the tension of liminal space,

numinous,

the already-but-not-yet;

Gravity and grief,

Joy and ingenuity,

All of this splendor.



vii. Father

I couldn't not write this poem  
It didn't seem right.  
to relegate the gifts of breathing  
to such simple things  
as moon.

We stand on the shoulders of our elders.  
and I am borne up by the courageous lover  
that has given everything  
to give me breath.

A strong hand on my shoulder  
one that has gripped, just today,  
innumerable reins and plowhandles and  
caressed fatal wounds and  
cradled accidents and pain.

Reminding of the responsibility  
to care for wildness. The great wild outside

Untangled it, and  
cast the offending piece of leafy rubble  
downward,  
satisfying its criteria  
for a well-tended web

Before I left this place, proud of spider  
wisdom,  
I noticed all the trash, strewn about  
nestled in leaves.

There were gorgeous moments  
everywhere  
hanging from every branch,  
but tragically,  
no one fastidious enough  
to clean up after man.

## ii. Resilient Web

A living room made of tightropes.

A delicate dancefloor

The compact framework of empty spaces

An elaborate labyrinth of footpaths.

Silver threads for hardwood flooring

No need for wallpaper

when crisp air buoys up your entire  
home.

I have heart strings,  
that stretch like living webs

hopes and dreams  
tentacles that reach

for something solid  
in the proximate maples.

wells of questions.

forests of suspicion

inescapable feelings of beetleness

that make me ache for control

And so I forge my homestead, plastering  
everything with sticky notes, name tags,  
invented syllables.

Soon my adam craft is loosened by the  
lapping of waves at high tide  
and carried out to oblivious seas at low.  
Leaving me empty-handed and older.

Always feeling the weight of inexorable  
focus.

Caught like a moth, reprimanded in the steady  
lunar gaze of a gentle grandmother.

vi. Grammy Moon

Reliable moonlight.

Like Rosie the Riveter in the sky,  
she pulls, strongly, on my water content,  
on the shoreline,  
on my imagination,  
She can be intimidating,  
biceps, crows feet,  
a bandana on her forehead

the music humming  
underneath the soil,  
the silvery chimes of twilight,  
the whispering voices  
of the windswept pines  
lovely...

But I forget so easily  
I have my doubts.

Casting vision into the abyss  
that exists  
between my mouth and my last sentence.  
A chasm  
Almost as large as the distance  
I lept, to tie a bridge of thin strength  
between two blackberry bushes.

A web of possibility,  
a space for someone to stop in,  
and stay if they like.

iii. Deanna

the careless elements  
berate me  
with raindrops  
and pollination.

Caught in the crossfire  
of falling leaves  
and a horizontal breeze

I will never manage to be tidy again.

acorns and thunderstorms  
fertile, harmless things  
that make my heart both sing and sigh and  
gasp  
however irrational

V. Sudden Awareness

eagle hunts snake  
snake devours phoebe  
moon pulls on coastline  
waves caress rocky outcrops  
my soul is breakwater  
knifes edge  
moths flit erratically towards the scent of  
their destination  
i have questions  
the cycle is elegant

the great cycle of things  
pays little attention  
to my sentimental face  
Preparing my insides  
for the constant stream of electrons  
that soak me  
in the electricity of  
alive.

Thunderclap - company is coming.  
I scamper, and sip the air, pregnant with  
anticipation  
The ground is  
charged with the footfalls of the gods.  
We are moths buffeted by thunderheads  
minute  
dusty winged  
borne by winds

iv. Intertidal

In my life

I am looking for somewhere to call home  
grasping, finger-painting,  
pasting labels on the foliage like it's my divine  
responsibility  
sketching scenery to give back to the scenery  
on birch bark canvas.  
macaroni necklaces for mother nature

I am reaching outward  
like rockweed  
clinging for stability  
to sedimentary constructs

I am intertidal  
half ocean, half land

more than land, but not quite ocean  
not quite here, but not entirely there either.  
restless.

I am a balancing act  
more akin to a pendulum  
busy, restless, self-deluded, energetic  
than to a tightrope walker  
practiced, wise, centered.

I live in the strip of aquatic land that is  
pregnant with potential.  
Where women are tethered to the rhythm of  
the tide  
and men thrust ever heavenward, unsatisfied.