

my lady reaper

Hatred is sweeping the leaves away
from the flowerbeds we plant together,
Death and I.

She gathers for us a poison's kiss
in a bouquet of rotting petals
and leaves them here.

I walk with my lady reaper
to visit Love
whose letters char and turn black
and drop as ashes
to join the cast-down bunch
of flowered kissing stems.

Death has waited a long time
to see you fall,
but I have waited longer.
I tell you this in letters
that I seal and place
among the stems of Hatred's flowers.

You will never read them,
so Death and I continue
our flower-tending
while Hatred's broom is
sweeping, sweeping, sweeping,
and Love is ashes.

Miriam Joy