

FOUR TEMPLES

Jim Richards—Department of English

Solomon at the temple took a hundred
and twenty thousand sheep, and opened them
and what came out? A crimson shadow
spreading like a flood of prophecy,

Filling the world all the way to spring
in the upper room, where you took bread,
broke it, took wine and drank. That supper
still in your belly by the time

Your time had come. How they took you
like bread and broke, and let your wine
spill on the ground. How they crowned you,
King, prophesy, who struck thee?

Here I let the cup pass from me. You didn't.
Here I think of linen shed like skin, spices
sweetening the empty tomb when Magdalene
came to see—why weepst thou?

Because you live, Lord. I can see you
standing there before her in the garden
as she reaches out a hand to touch.
I can see you. Here. I am reaching, too.

TEMPLE MARRIAGE

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The woman in the wedding dress
is on her knees. The man, too.

They face each other across a cushioned cube.
Their hands are joined. And their eyes.

A little air escapes as she says, Yes.
He says it, too. Behind them are mirrors

and in the mirrors, people wearing dresses and ties.
The room is silent. But someone softly cries.