

# Take What You're Given

## Lucy Wainwright Roche

Seven Sundays late for front steps  
Sitting warm in the midday block  
Little bare feet, dirty forehead  
I can see where your train will stop  
At the point of several mountains  
Sold from one to another tribe  
Just a basket baby waiting  
Towering at only three feet high  
I know "take what you're given"  
I know "seen and not heard"  
You left me buckets of ribbons  
Woven together by flying birds  
Me and you crept on for hours  
Right behind the big blue house  
All the roots of all her flowers  
So to feed all our creatures' mouths  
She cried, "What have you done here?"  
You girls are the devil's kind!"  
I can't run any faster  
Leaving all the battles behind  
After dinner, kitchen quiet  
Hot air from the dishes washed  
Just a sink light buzzing brightly  
In the front room, TV on  
I know "take what you're given"  
I know "seen and not heard"  
You left me buckets of ribbons  
Woven together by flying birds  
And the church sings hallelujah  
When you're sitting still and right  
Peering just between two shoulders  
Trying to see what the priest looks like  
I know and also have you  
I know all things were made  
Lift me to heavier water  
Just in case I can be saved  
I will wait here one last morning  
Shield my eyes to the blazing sun  
If I scan the streets for warning  
I can see when your train will come

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