

**To reassure myself**

To reassure myself  
that this is real,  
I go out  
to gather pain like rosebuds  
from the passing days,  
leaving my shadow  
to linger in odd corners,  
sending my voice  
to echo in the rooms  
I inhabit,  
so that when I go  
there will be at least  
a little of me left.  
And I gather rosebuds  
that will blossom  
into pain like thorns  
when I go away.

—*Anne LeDressay*