

FIVE POEMS TO SIXFOLD

Brightness Emerging

Still dark when I drive to the Y, the first Halloween lights,
Election signs are up—Carbone, Proietti, DiNolfo—
Leaving the dream of Italian Irondequoit for the city,
I move invisible through dawn
In the clear air at the beginning of autumn

Traffic lights swing out in the dark
Perpetual green arrow where St. Paul veers right
Green lights of Thorndyke and Titus,
Road curves, mimics river's contours to the west

There are people in the crepuscular light
They are waiting, city bus, school bus
They have gotten themselves out of sleep to this place
Where they must be still again

I cross the river at the Maplewood bridge
The door of the Y with the light still on looks
Different now with a glow in the east,
People are moving inside the old brick building,
Shapely woman walking away from the barbells,
Wiry diminutive eighty year-old with do-rag
Feeling her way into the donut weights

I work pull down, leg press, leg extension, abdominal
Red lit letters Y M C A
Spread wide over second floor wooden wall
Sky milk & pearl-colored in windows between
I go to recliner bike, where on a tv screen people talk,

Turn it off to watch sugar maple going olive in the sunrise
Winged seedlings stand out pale, carrying the cycle,
Rose garden brightening across the street,
Red and pink flowers on the last day of summer
White squares are cards marked with varietal names
Dick Clark Sunsprite Sutter's Gold

Event Horizon Is Closer Than You Think

The spider swings on a strand from a branch
too far to tell. The great tree of midsummer
responds to the high breeze from its unfathomable depths.
Things we knew were what we saw, or connected to it,

until every indulgence the priest sold caused our hand-hewn
cathedral to crumble, and the ensuing babble of voices
shattered the stained glass. So the real thing somehow got free
of us, like a firecracker we held too long in a culvert,

We lost the moral handle: it doesn't matter what we do.
The snake we thought we had a grip on's, gone.
The men with knowledge want us to forget the puncture marks,
They say look, there's an event horizon in our neighborhood,

Soon we'll bow down with fear and believe sparrows' terror
nesting in this rickety ferris wheel of a zodiac,
and a new Constantine will stamp an oval in the sky with his approval
promising deliverance from information, with information,

continuing to keep us from the stations of the cross,
which are here, where Buddha sat,
where locust pods shade each other in the rising sun,
where the spider has climbed too high for us to see.

How Things Look

A thin strand of
Horizontal cloud
Across the lower
Half of a full moon
After a night of rain:
A hair out of place?

The thrill of her
Letting you see her
As she is

Lament for Trayvon

sunlight hits the maple in sultry bars of light
it conjures and sanctifies,
gives depth, gives relief,
it differentiates
but does not discriminate.

artificial light does *that*
the kind that helped
George Zimmerman know
the intruder was a new guy

What if the maple in sunrise was a naked woman
even in the light she has her own shadows and mysteries
Is she less innocent having gone through childbirth?

What I'm seeing now, nature in sunrise, some can't see,
the man troubled that his girl is not a virgin,
the man who knows the intruder is Up to No Good.

Their cancer of the mind
has sealed the dark box tight.
Lack of even a glimpse
of true sunrise makes
their knowledge useless.
They find creation guilty for being alive.

The Mayflower Compact

The immigrant boy told a story
of how ancestors had been reduced
by hunger and climate change to
a few score on a sandy strip of land.

Of how a hurricane would have finished them off
except for a great fish come from the depths
carrying them through the black shark water
to soft breeze green place with black soil.

His teacher smiled, said interesting
then turned to the core curriculum of history
and told the children of the Inevitable Pilgrims
searching for their rights under this rock and how

They sat at table with Noble Indian
Cornbread and Turkey because it had to be,
Indians had no choice, it was part of the plan,
even what they were called, Columbus' mistake

But it all worked out, even the Mayflower
heading for Virginia steady and slow