

Spray Can Art

At the train station.

The radio is on. There is interference.

One is left wondering, or wandering.

It's the time between day and night. The sky

Is almost fake looking. Makes me

Think of spray can art peddled by street

Sellers. The landscapes they paint live

Seen through the mists of paint spray.

There is a charm of sorts. But would

I hang one up on my wall? The days

Are getting longer and the outdoor beckons.

Flats of plants lure me on. But

I don't want to plant too premature.

Expose them to early cold blasts

And faint sunlight. The street painter

Wore several layers that he peeled

Off as the day warmed.

At home, at the end of the day,

I straighten the landscape I haggled

With the painter for. A bargain I'm sure.

Lying on a Futon on Union Street in Salem Massachusetts.

(inspired by "Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota" by William Wright)

I lie on the futon, the ribs of the frame,
Dig into my back as I stare at a streetlight
Flickering on the beamed ceiling.
I hear the faraway honking of an anxious
Car and then furtive door slams that
Echo into the hollows of an empty night.
I turn on my side and hear the percussive
Laments of an old song played badly
From the bar on the corner. Then a voice
Rises to sing a refrain that stirs in me a longing
For a time when I laid in a different bed.
A dog barks begging to be let in. I have
Wasted my life.

The Days Ring Hollow

The days ring hollow when the sun doesn't shine.
I walk the streets with my dog who noses
Around the bushes and trees for some reminder
Of other dogs that have passed this way. We spot

A cage, no two cages, at a favorite corner.
Inside one of them is a young squirrel frantic.
The dog and I are both nonplussed. I try
To open the trap door to free him. Nothing.

I take a picture to send to a friend. It's interesting
How one can be so immediate with these events.
The friend is far away dealing with his dad's estate as he died
Intestate. If one is the only son where

Does that leave him? Will there be questions?
Will more periphery relatives matter? Even surface?
Standing at the caged squirrel. I look around
And see no others. It is early. I walk

The dogs early. First Milo, my labpit mix and then
Delilah my Jack Russell mix who loves to scamper
At squirrels. She does not know what to think.
On the train to work I pass marshland.

It's amazing how the greenery arranges itself
Around the water as if it was drawn that way.
The conductor is confusing herself as she issues
Tickets which is confusing the passengers.

The act of confusion is something to ponder.
The twitch of eyebrows and quirk of lips. Finally,
I sit back and think of the last ditch effort I made.
I stretch the softer than expected iron of the cage

And freed the squirrel.

Springing

Books sprawled everywhere.
The day was sunny and without care.
I wanted to share it with someone
But there is no one.

But that's okay.

The forsythia are blooming and the windows
Are full with pansies and ivy and Vinca vines.

The cats enjoy the opened windows
And the dogs lie around feeling the heat
Already.

Early this morning, a sway of fog
Hung over the landscape like scotch
Tape over a photo.