

## All Praise and Honor to ADD

Which I don't have: well, maybe a touch;  
the possibility of a fragment.  
Like fragments leading to fragments of a fern,  
the stems parenting the same leaves in ever smaller leaves.

Like patterns replicated to make my children.  
Which is why the expression "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree"  
distinguishes both my sons.  
Apples evolved and migrated from their birthplace  
in ancient Kazakhstan;  
far across the unfathomable body of water, the Atlantic Ocean;  
the sometimes green water when it oceans for lobsters an undersea world.  
So quiet in that world whales require a rumbling epiglottis.

The epiglottis my wife undulates when she snores.  
Like the undulation of *Planaria* I saw once in a lab aquarium,  
each a flatworm that could attach to your skin if you stuck your hand in;  
which, of course, you wouldn't – but you think about it.  
You think, what if I put my hand in the *Planaria* water?  
And who knows why we think like that?  
Why the instant visualization of something that would never happen?  
You don't ask the brain to make a film – you don't say,  
could you make me a film showing my hand  
feathered with undulating suction cup worms?

Worms with brown skin flecked by stony black patterns,  
like the stones found along rock-studded shores of Lake Superior:  
A blue body of water lined with lanes of a deeper blue;  
the water you'd never want to walk in.  
But there you are immersed in that frigid water,  
blinking your eyes to see only blur,  
and orange lobsters, which don't exist here;  
but each flaps its claws for your attention,  
and they sing together in bubbly, multi-phonic clamor  
with all praise and honor to ADD.

## **Academic Pathology**

In regard to your publication *Academic Pathology*, which, I know, is about academic research in the field of pathology, I have a suggestion:  
why not devote your publication to the pathology of being an academic?  
After all, that's what I first thought of when reading *Academic Pathology*:  
academics who can't make a public presentation without referencing somebody else,  
like they're so insecure they can't say anything without wheeling in some like-minded intellectual concubine.  
Or think it only natural that their arcane field of study supports the gravitational pull of the Earth.

It could include, as well, the effects of academic pathology on students with a steady chiseling away at minds not seen since the Grand Canyon was sculpted.

How students must be like common flies, spitting out digestive juices only to lap them up again upon the words of academics whom they pay to inflict the injuries of assigned tasks,  
while overloads of anxiety hormones create unnecessary dreams  
about not handing in homework when it was due.

Sharing the juice of learning, though important only to college pathology, because no one cares once in the workforce:  
whether or not Spinoza was right about democracy,  
or whether a certain protein is involved in executive function.

Which, by the way, must not exist in academics, because academics, by nature, don't see the big picture;  
and, by definition, need to be cloistered away into learning institutions where the cost of attending keeps rising at pathological rates.

## Dark Light

I'm a scientist guy who works with light  
and it doesn't smell; doesn't weigh a thing.  
You can put tons of it in a truck and it gets the same mileage.  
It doesn't make a sound: You can't hear it.  
So silent it can only surprise;  
like it does artists when compelled to paint a still life  
with at least one green pear  
and the right salience of light;  
the right spread and softness and weave.

The right airy color;  
not the blued light through a flaccid icicle,  
or the meadowed light in the gold of dawn  
when the light could trace a pear with orange chroma;  
but a light that cradles dust along its silent rays  
and illumines with a favored gray the vodka in its glass.

Which I hope is included in the still life,  
along with a prism to cut light into its parts  
and maybe the silhouette of a person's aura;  
as long as it isn't the aura of a deranged president  
whose aura could not fill a tin can  
even after the anchovies slid out.

The different light, the aura,  
often appearing above Mother Mary.  
Sometimes a halo of red neon  
billboarding half-closed, statue eyes.

Half-closed to the illumination from within:  
called by the illumined the *dark light*;  
tunneled from caves of the illumined heart,  
cleaved from a glowing magma,  
pulsed through the vaped chest

comes the quaking of dark light.  
The texture, the chroma;  
the presence of light in a world too dark.

## **Great Argument**

He said being enlisted didn't make no difference.  
You can be killed anytime  
in the wrong neighborhood, at home,  
driving:  
Just by staying alive.

Shoot.  
I never thought of it that way.  
Even when handed a rifle,  
a belt with explosives,  
and training to remove mid-brain hesitation against killing another  
that chances for being killed stay the same as...  
living on Elm Avenue in Saskatoon;  
or on Yankee Doodle Lane in Oak Park.

But he has a point.  
You never know when you'll be the outlier:  
the vegetarian who collapses while jogging,  
the stay-at-home mom hit from behind by a man  
who forgot to take his pills,  
the family man dropped by cancer.

Might as well stop kidding around  
and enlist  
because you can only figure on one thing:  
death.

## **Sleeper**

It's not like you're going to wake him up:  
how would you do it?  
Lightly whisper in his ear  
when cars already echo sounds?  
Or wiggle his shoe;  
but don't do that or he'll go into attack mode  
and you'll need to avoid his pocket knife  
and his wild eyes inches from your face.

You're flummoxed,  
walking along the sidewalk with other shoppers,  
store signs as far as the eye can see,  
poles wrapped in blue Christmas bulbs.  
It's still afternoon:  
Why did he choose to sleep right there,  
not by arrowing his body lengthwise along a wall;  
instead, perfectly right-angled  
and stretched full length across the sidewalk  
like a log across a path?

His eyes are placidly closed  
against sunlight,  
and the face under the wool hat  
looks sensible.  
In theory, he's not challenging anyone  
except for the mix up  
about how homeless should rest.

There's nothing to do but walk around him.  
But you can't get him out of your head:  
He's like a grammatical error in a book,  
that one streak on the window you need a ladder for,  
the maraschino cherry stuck in a bottle.

It's like you want to walk in tight circles  
just to fret about it:  
But he's not an error, or a streak, or a cherry;  
he's a real, live human being.

You just have to let him know  
somehow  
he took a wrong turn.