

Diptych

I. The Philippines

The war breaks.

Resources are scarce.
The oldest boy is sent

down the mountain for food.
The house is empty

when he returns.
His family is split

into different camps.
They do all they can

to reunite.
His mother returns

but without his sisters.
His father returns

but without his brothers.
The boy never loses

his need to apologize.

II. Minnesota

What she wanted was
to give her child a way

to live better.
A shelter, clothes, a guitar.

A way to be human
rather than merely fit.

A luxury, some say.

She gave her child her
hairline and detached lobes.

She gave her child her smarts.
The kind that severs

one into two
divorces flesh from thought.

She gave her child away.

The Fittest

We're all just trying to survive.
Handed instincts at conception.
Learned our habits as children.
We are animals with books.

We're all just trying to create.
Dance, act, write, discuss.
A being's purpose is to produce.
We're all just trying to conceive.

We're all just trying to reproduce.
One can't always blame one's mom.
They fuck you up, say some.
Art is a mirror, say others.

We're animals with music,
the ability to produce art,
to preserve, to distort
the habits learned as children.

We all have something to admit.
We've turned away from wrecks.
Fit disasters in straight-jackets.
We're all just trying to self-preserve.

We are animals with bibles,
yet we turn away from wrecks.
We all have something to confess:
our instincts bestowed at conception.

Instructions for Emerging:

It's learned from being thrown far
then finding your feet don't touch.

It may be traumatic for a child.

Adults may wonder

Did I ever know anything?

Once you've felt your lungs filling
with something other than air
you may become something
other than human. You may
become a species that does not
live in a house with photos
ceiling fans, a piano.

You may become an animal
that does not own anything.

You will have daydreams of death:

a body pinned to a wall

by an SUV. Sweating

shuddering, even

an odor will emerge

due to every warning-

siren in your vicinity

resounding.

Bio II

When under the heat-lamps of nature, life revises. -Charles Darwin

Under the heat-lamps of nature, life revises.
Players make unscripted changes
when one's life prescribes a crisis.

And one carries on in disguises
until one's own makeup is strange.
Under the heat-lamps of nature, life revises,

calling for nothing less than autolysis.
Some make the choice to derange
when life prescribes a crisis.

We grieve the loss of vices
when vanity spars with a virtuous binge
but under the heat-lamps of nature, life revises.

Upheaval has its pluses and minuses.
We've all seen a dream house unhinge
when a life prescribes a crisis.

Charting systems of approach entices
us suckers into the fringe.
Under the heat-lamps of nature, life revises,
when one's life prescribes a crisis.