

Reflecting Pools, Refracting Present

Hold Fast, Your Relative, Truth

Lined up in rows, I was the garden's hedges, and the garden's shears, too—
the ones that shredded the hedges, and the rust on the shears, discarded,
and the rain that rusted them, and the rain that rebirthed the hedges,
all their overgrown overgrowth, now unchecked, like I was their sprawl
-ing vines and branches, and the sound of deafening silence when they fell;
but wasn't I also the ear that heard the sound in the storm, and the thunder
that shook the earth, and the hand that steadied it, and the hand that held it,
and the hand that held mine, and yours, and the garden's shears,
shredding the garden's hedges, lined up into rows.

April 29, 2004 [Welcome the summer Sun]

A small body still carries many cares; that curious child who spends time in the forest behind the house, where summer-colored leaves like lanterns light the way, 'til the trees start shedding fur-like leaves on a cooling-down day; the Autumn breeze breathes new air for small lungs to inhale, out from the forest, into the house in front, where colorless sheets seem to pass over the earth, painting it's terra a pathetically inexperienced hue; one blink before that tone turns back toward deep emerald riches and grows, upward toward the warming of the summer Sun that clung desperately on at the edge of spring -ing forth new worlds to life; and the cold hearts of winter, birthed in January's frost, with icy aortas only waiting to melt, barely feel the Autumn breeze as it gestates under heated breath this April.

Un-Ashing

Sleeping dead men were wrested from their slumbers by dense fumes, un-massing, all kinds of light, un-disappearing; the smell of sulfur fanning flames retreated, tongues of fire, un-licking their lips, retracting towards the mouth; darkness un-enveloped the city, un-engulfed by the smoke to shake off layers of dust, un-ashing; Earth un-rose, falling from the sky, to resettle the summit, an umbrella of ash above snapping shut... there was sleep into the late morning, sheltered under the beautiful mountain view; a truly pleasant summer day rescinded to reveal a blissfully ignorant night sky, un-dawning.

Roadkill

It was a heavy night, that night, filled with darkness so corporeal the road ahead was hard to see, so obscured. So uncertain, it was.

I swear.

It was.

Headlights did little to no-thing to clarify that night, when one car drove behind me, another to my right. Phalanx moving forward, a fairly certain trap.

It was.

That night when a possum just appeared there, on the asphalt, playing dead, and playing with fate. It was, because to brake would be a blow dealt behind, and to swerve would be a strike to my side. To stop? I would never. Could never. Shouldn't ever. Right? We have to go on, can't mourn what we leave behind. We have to, *they say*, go on and go further is really the only way.

They say. They swear.

Is it?

I killed the possum.

Clean the blood off your boots, soldier, father says; collateral damage, what a shame, mother says, as I wipe the red from my tires...

but it stained the white paint until the next rain could wash it all away— the reminder, and all it was. It was. I let myself forget about the possum, probably rotting on that lonely dark road, and so I had forgotten it all by the time her children took root in my backyard, made residence under my car(e). I suppose, they had clawed their way from ruin, from Death's Door, where I left them.

I did.

They were survivors, after all, so their spirit screamed, live. They screamed back and did, making homes of their mother's grave, in the domain of her murderer, they survived.

They'll thrive.

Descendants of our violence, so often forced to flee, to share in a world of peace drained from their own blood, and bones, and oh so many bodies— to form the foundations of a civil society, where you might just trust the car in front not to brake so suddenly, swerve to the right, or stop altogether, even forever, to spare the lowly possum.

It wasn't.

God's Focus Group: Participant #1, called *Conversing with a Restless Soul*

What stops you?

Fear does.

Are you afraid that it will hurt?

No. I know that it will.

Are you afraid that it won't feel good?

No. I know that it will.

Are you afraid that it will disappoint you?

No. I know that it will.

Are you afraid that it won't?

No. I know that it will.

Are you afraid that nothing else can ever compare?

I was never really one for relativity, you see.

Are you afraid that everything can?

Well, I do still find relativity in most things.

Are you afraid that there will be nothing left when it's over? That you'll have changed too much to see the start? That you'll be exactly the same and exactly as small? That you'll never be good enough? That you'll never get too far, never finish, never find exactly what you were looking for. Never love. Never live, never, never... never be?

No... Yes... I don't know.

That'll you'll always be second-best? That you'll always make it to the destination when the trip wasn't worth it? That you'll always run too far and too fast? That you'll always be hunting for something out of reach? Always unsatisfied, always hungry, always, always... always nothing?

Yes! No! I don't know.

Are you afraid that it will end?

No. I know that it will.

Are you afraid that it won't?

Yes, because it won't. I will.

What moves you?

Fear does.

What are you afraid of?

That I won't have enough time.

God?

Yes, soul?

Are you as restless as I, with all the time in the world?

No, soul. I do not understand the word.

Why, God?

I finished with enough time left to rest.