

BECOMING VISIBLE AND OTHER POEMS

(BECOMING VISIBLE, MORNING STAR, SOMEWHERE IN THE
GARAGE, UNTETHERED, AND THE ORDER OF PAPER)

Becoming Visible

Wellness, here, means to relax.
Calming thoughts bring second chances.
Today's script is not already written—
I start again, and notice—
out the window, in my heart,
what unrolls itself before my eyes, or
what gets untwisted inside.
My robe felt tight as I sat down,
so I loosened the belt
rather than wonder, what it meant
in some deeper sense.
One woman is beginning
to like the taste of freedom.

It is never too late, I know,
to come into resonance
with natural processes—
in spite of my past, in service to
what was supposed to be, instead of what is.
I was shown how to put on costumes,
to better suit what each man wanted—
how to intuit his needs, and become
the person who could fulfill them.
I felt uncomfortable, and pinched.
My feelings escaped me—
My actions were subliminal—stuck
on auto pilot. Like animals designed
to camouflage in their ecosystem,
it's only when we move
that we stand out—become visible.

Morning Star

Bright Venus
cheers the still dark sky.
She teases up the Sun,
appearing to wink
as she sparkles, whispering
the night is almost over—
Beauty precedes the next act.
The new chapter knows how
to write itself, as if
it's preordained.
Yet, it will be breath taking—
I look again, and see
Venus is rising
while below, first lightness
arrives to the east.
She lifts the night,
as a curtain in a theater
reveals the stage set,
perhaps some of the actors.
Now, I can make out
the black shapes of trees.
She shines against
deep blue, as color
comes back above us
as a canopy of hope—
the day is coming,
ready or not.
She oversees the moment
of her disappearance,
once her work is done.
Venus cajoles—
come back again, big Sun.
Sleeping later now,
every morning
during Fall.

Somewhere In The Garage

It was a day like no other, one I chose
rather than the other date, delivered cold
and as unwanted as the whole disaster
that led up to it—the ending no one wanted.
Everyone hoped for the denouement entitled, cured.
We could have applauded—I could have helped her
in getting back to normal.

I can't help her any more.
In a park she used to walk to, as a child
a park with rose bushes, I arranged
to hold a memorial service for her—
City fee and permit; rented sound system.
Speakers who delivered tributes—
I still have all the written speeches,
somewhere in the garage.

There was an outpouring from the community.
She grew up here, and I felt lifted up
at the lowest moment—I even wrote a speech
for my friend Jet to read, which she edited
as was appropriate—friends of friends came,
friends of my mother who I had known
since I was a teenager, came—
Her father, with his first wife, came—
that was the odd shape of events, in his life.

We got through the service, and
the gathering here afterwards—
it was a worthy send off, one thing I could do
and did, to honor her, who deserved better—
who deserved more time than
the twenty three years she had on this Earth.
Who might she have become
after the shadow of her illness ended with, cured?
What would her life be like now,
as the calendar turns?

Untethered

What is there, that is always present,
never changes—life itself,
the teacher suggested. It could be
also called awareness, in our emotional selves,
not a mental trick—I can be guilty
of mere cleverness, like most of us.
To be real in how I'm feeling—notice
what registers in my body, and
following that thread, where it takes me—
what fear or grief needs to be uncovered
where it is hiding, and then uncoiled;
allowed to breathe, and tell its story,
recite its mantra that is held, so tightly.

How to release what it is we grasp
and hold onto, for dear life—
which only comes when we relax the fist.
We were taught, to just hang on—
to some preconception, not open to be
questioned, or we will be lost,
like an astronaut on a space walk
whose life line is cut.
Whereas, it's more like, after a birth,
when the umbilical cord is tied off—
you cannot even start, cry out
until that moment—rejoice
at your adventure, already in progress.

The Order Of Paper

Power concentrates itself at the final steps.
There is a release, when things start over, fresh
It can be as simple as a new month—a new page
on the calendar turns—I believe in the order of paper.
While more and more, people give away their secrets
to devices that are digital, and privacy is swept away
on the altar of convenience and connectivity.

I move at a slower pace, listening to my body's needs
in order to arrive in one piece, not scattered in the wind,
my molecules reduced to dust—that will happen soon enough.
It helps that I live in a spot that's fairly remote—
at a distance from Washington and New York,
in the mountains, where a cool breeze caresses me in summer.
I follow the phases of the moon and listen to bird songs.

But I am not immune to the cultural influences.
I care about the world, although my focus remains personal.
I watch as you take out our trash and recycling for pick up—
we smile across the room at each other, and snuggle in bed.
Everyone's lives are richer for that—we are physical beings
grounded in our selves and upheld by our love relationships,
and I'm glad we can interact, through modern devices and travel.

At least in summer, people still take vacations.
I'm struggling to grasp, how cyber warfare is insidious
and moves our malleable minds to become combatants.
Divide, divide is the interfering purpose—more and more,
I've come to value Ruth Bader Ginsburg's stated belief
that we can disagree without being disagreeable.
May love remain stronger than the urge to be hateful.