

Journey

The Family Field

Grandpa's voice has faded into the memories of other people's stories,
And when we water the family field every year we think of him,
And try to get the seed to grow like it did when he grew it,
But it doesn't –
And maybe never will again.

But we go out to the field again and again and toss the seed and till the soil,
Because that's what was done before we were born,
And we think that it will be what is done after we die,
But we don't know –
And we don't ever wonder.

The sky is dark with the dust that blows across it like dirty snow,
The children wear masks and goggles and lean forward when they walk,
And the adults are covered with scars that make it hard for them to move,
But they struggle through –
And walk the field again and again.

Grandma's voice is telling us that it is time to move on but we don't listen,
And we still cannot figure out how to get the land to grow again,
And the children are taught how to grow the seed as if the seed will grow,
But it doesn't –
And maybe never will again.

Journey

The Depths

I stood upon the rocky shore,
At the edge of the lake once more,
And staring into this blackened sea,
I saw all the worst parts of me.

Black and oily, this undulation,
Haunting me since my creation,
And I whispered to my friend,
“Let’s go in and back again.”

Finally, in we swam,
Him by me, hand in hand.
He looked at me from far away,
“Let’s go back,” I heard him say.

Letting go, I swam alone,
Into my darkness, my unknown,
Staring back, upon the shore,
My friend screamed, “Go no more!”

Suddenly, I drank the depths,
With nothing else, released regrets.

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Morning Commute

I start in Brooklyn, every weekday, except for major holidays and four weeks of vacation.
On a Tuesday, I saw a man that looked like Laurence Fishbourne
While traveling on the subway
And I sat down next to him
I asked him for a red pill
But he stared straight ahead
Pulling his lapels down with both hands
Just let me get a chance, I pleaded with him,
To see the real world
He asked me, you on drugs?
No, Morpheus, but I want to be.
I said the last part to myself and laughed out loud, moving out the door before it trapped me in.
The man on the platform had hair like a tentacled monster from Pirates of the Caribbean
The ride, not the movie, I think proudly
An animatronic wild sea creature beached at 14th street
And he's playing Walking in Memphis on acoustic guitar
This is New York, I tell him and drop a dollar into his empty case
The fluorescent lights bounce off the polish on my shoes
He sings to me, there's a pretty little thing waiting for the King
But I'm walking on past the frozen bronze statues, the money bag man that never gets away
A hand clasps my shoulder
I look into a face like mine
How you been buddy, he says to me, smiling with blinding white teeth
I blink, confused, and realize
I got off too soon
Sorry, I'm late, I say to him
He laughs, slumming it today?
What? I'm distracted, stuck between empty tracks
You're not wearing a suit
I force a laugh and walk away
We used to work together and before I left he told me, heavy is the head that wears the crown
And I stopped talking to him ever since
The next train is mine
I take it to the port authority
I like to bowl there
Even though the lanes look like a club and not like the AMF with red rotating hot dogs and dollar beer
Ticket? The bus driver is annoyed
It's in the blazer I'm not wearing
But I pat my shirt anyway, feeling in pockets of the phantom jacket
The bus I'm on is 30 minutes behind the one I should be on
And I'm writing in a tiny notebook about how Groundhog's Day doesn't start in the middle
It starts in the beginning
But it's not until the middle that you know the answers to all the Jeopardy questions
Sitting on the bus to New Jersey
The skyline mocking me from behind
Look ma, I made it in the big city
But the gray office park I'm going to is only visible at the very end of the trip.