

## **Perspectives of the Sun and Moon**

The fabric of her dress was woven sunbeams,  
a bright yellow that laughed at the world.  
Her two hands neatly folded into the small  
pockets on her hips. One of his hands fell  
at the small of her back as he guided  
her across the crowded room of people.  
A flare of heat crosses her face as a slim woman,  
dressed in black, looks her up and down.  
Clouds of judgment emanate from that gaze,  
and she bubbles up ready to burst.  
Her heart throbs like a gassy star  
about to run out of fuel.  
He brings her back down to the earth  
as he spins her around to the music  
playing in the room crowded with people.  
Their eyes are all on them now  
and even if she's not perfect she still  
won't let them look away.  
The woman in black creeps along the wall  
with forlorn eyes, simply wondering  
what it would be like to wear a yellow dress.

## **Natural Science**

The silence in the science speaks  
for itself. There is no desperate cry  
of longing for importance. It simply  
is. There is no hierarchy, only chains,  
and each thing has its place linked  
together in life and prey, and death  
and predator. There is no question  
in the necessity of death. One simply  
dies. One becomes food. One is no  
longer a competitor. One is gone.

One is gone that more might live.  
A weak member of the herd  
gets picked off and devoured.  
Cutting the fat, as they say,  
is what nature is all about.  
A beautiful dissection called life.

## **Just a Piece**

A soft pluck separates the part from the whole.  
The flower springs back as the delicate hand retreats.  
She examines the petal with a child's discerning eye.  
It shines back, illuminated white, exposing its veins.

Up close, the petal almost shimmers. A translucent  
bruise forms where she pressed. She shifts her fingers.  
Her dirty palms seem rough and incapable of comprehending  
the texture. Instinctively, she draws the petal to her lips.

She drags the petal across her face slowly, tracing a line  
from her forehead to her chin. The softness tickles her lips,  
and she smiles wrinkling her nose. In a final flourish  
she places the petal on her tongue curious about the taste.

A thousand years later, her lover would tell her  
her kisses were like roses. The words melted away  
like the petals falling from her mouth, because  
he would never know what she felt like.

## Jesus Was a Baby

The poster's color scheme is cool pastels  
and is meant to hang on nursery walls.  
"Jesus Was a Baby" is at the top of the page;  
its purpose to teach Christianity at an early age.  
The poster proclaims "Baby Jesus went to Church."  
It seems as if its makers skipped their research.  
For each group of Christian there is a new interpretation,  
but words as ignorant as these drive me to frustration.  
Even though part of faith is leaving some things a mystery,  
how hard can it be to mess up your own history?

I, too, was raised to learn the Christian faith:  
Catholic school from Kindergarten to eighth.  
The same type of posters hung in the hall,  
explaining Jesus' birth and Lucifer's fall.  
Some of our teachings came right from the source  
and reading Exodus aloud was a part of the course.  
My teacher forgot something about that ancient text,  
it starts with Moses but what follows next  
is a detailed description of an ancient rite.  
The teacher instructed us to close our books tight.

If I were a teacher, I'd tell kids the truth—I'd tell them this:  
Baby Jesus was a Jew and there's a chapter in Exodus about how to perform a *bris*.

## **The History of Travel**

The Great Pyramids have always been a part of the past,  
even to the Ancient Egyptian scribes who were the first to write  
upon the walls. Did they mar the structures' beauty  
by leaving their mark? Those first travelers,  
sent by the Pharaohs to witness, to see  
the vast civilization, left their graffiti for all of history.

There would be no history  
if humans passed  
everything there was to see.  
The urge of witnesses to write  
has always struck travelers  
when they encounter beauty.

The Hanging Gardens was the closest thing to natural beauty  
recorded on the list of Ancient Wonders. This has changed over history.  
Now the natural has enchanted today's travelers,  
the same mountains, deserts, and plateaus the ancients passed.  
In my mind, it doesn't seem right  
to be indifferent to the mountains, to ignore the call of the sea.

My family vacations by the sea,  
not necessarily for the Outer Banks' beauty.  
A week in North Carolina became a family rite  
marking the passage of summer into history.  
All of travel is influenced by the past.  
Each journey starts in the footsteps of travelers.

There is a natural need to document among travelers,  
this overwhelming urge to share what they see.  
By sharing the places they have passed,  
and remarking on the beauty,  
travelers influenced the course of history.  
So much is said in the postcards we write.

Today, travel is a right.  
We are free to be travelers,  
and retrace history  
to see  
the beauty  
of the past.

We write what we see.  
Travelers witnessed beauty  
and passed it into history.