

I Feel the Walls Closing In and I Need to Rant, Sorry

I don't want THINGS

We fill our homes with tools and devices
and objects and plastic and
it intrudes on thought

It's as simple as blinking your eye
and more things are at your doorstep
it's like we've grown numb to it all

We pretend it's okay that there's
a little black puck with a voice
that sits in our rooms and talks to us
and as we're talking back
the things we ask for appear in the street
miraculously, by the truckload
carried by men who aren't paid enough
to afford those things
to sit on our shelves
coveted
dusty
untouched and unneeded

Maybe a few screws are loose
in the head
or maybe a loved one died
or maybe it's Christmas and
BAM
society pulls together
to stack the things so high
the sun doesn't shine through the windows

I look around me sometimes
and I feel that societal impulse creeping in
I feel the hands of shareholders
in their ivory towers
reaching down like puppeteers
hanging the newest carrot on a stick

a plaything for the masses
plastering it across billboards and phone screens
next to news of war in the East

Whenever I become aware of this absurdity
(when I'm not too busy living to be blind of it)
it feels like a form of assault

I've started to grow a phobia of
things

I'll go out to the store and it's like
a buzzing in my head
buy this thing, buy that thing
and I'll try so hard to get rid of it that
I end up going home
without the bread and coffee I came for

And I'm not immune to the bliss
of a cold
Coca-Cola
the release of a hot shower
or jazz music
or a comfy mattress, but
these walls of plastic and LED's and rubbish
are suffocating me

We cram little succulents and houseplants
into the corners
grasping for the natural
and I look at those with my face in my palm—
leaves or cellophane
what's the difference
when we're still all boxed up?

Cars Speed by, People Shuffle Their Feet, a Spider Eats

I walked down to the river
I passed a concerned couple
glancing at me behind their shoulders
a worn, old man with a limp
dragging luggage into a cheap motel
people have weird smells

a sign on bridge 6-14
it read
PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE
IN MEMORY OF LEON

I passed through the motor homes
musing at old cars that looked fun to drive
and a rotten fruit fell from a tree

I found a bench that looked over the river
an angler stood knee deep in the middle
casting his line

as I sat the bugs came into picture
swirling silently and blindly around branches
in mad clusters

the moon rose behind some leaves
nearly full, it sat on a pink horizon

then the webs came into picture
and for every branch there was a spiders web
and for every web there were two or three spiders
climbing up and down
up and down
feasting on the many clouds of bugs
by the river

Mundane

Sigh,

a burnt smell of motor oil
just barely noticeable
through the pungent
grassy aroma
as summer
and parts of a broken mower
lie in wait

But the buds
do not wait
though the ground
is old and unforgiving
the grass
does not care
it rises
knowing I employ
the unthinkable
a metal box
a four-stroke
combustion engine
a carbon steel
blade spinning
50 times a second
to cut the grass

Why?

My thought as I stare
into the yard that
no one cares about
ignored by the cars that drive by
yet I labor over my
empty
sad
green holocaust
I try to cleanse it
powered by commodity

gasoline and blind
cultural inhibition
I wake up fretting over it
lamenting over
the act of stopping the grass
from being grass

Death Sells

A moment in the cold
a faint, soft sprinkle of rain
pitter-patters on my hood
a frayed, wiry man walking toward
skulking, looks at me
I can tell he doesn't like me
"we don't agree on many things"
is surely what we're both thinking
about each other
passing by one another
to the department store

More gray, flat, damp ground awaits us
we part ways, he disappears behind
a row of ugly, tacky, plastic christmas trees
I have one job here
to find the rat killer

The things that kill are all front and center
as bright and varied as the holiday decor
bold and standing strong
the aisle is filled with death in many forms
liquids that make the area uninhabitable
poisonous treats that lure in the hungry
a sleek box with a spike that impales through the skull
or a more, archaic trap that, in and of itself
doesn't always kill, but clamps down its victim
maiming them-
there's even a speaker system
it emits a frequency that disorients
anything sensitive enough to hear it...

I gaze
absent-mindedly
suddenly slightly disoriented myself
an aura, maybe
or the electric whine of
the christmas tree lights

ringing
high-pitch
repelling thought
activating the moth-brain

Ah, this one says
"livestock friendly"
death in the shape of sweet, little pellets
shaped like the ones my chickens eat
I grab a big box
thinking of them
and of the rats that keep stealing their food