

INVENTORY

And did you survive the nocturnal dark
the bleak encounters with old mistakes and losses
and shattered dreams in the drawn-out night?
Or did you step out before the night ended and watch the twinkling
blue paleness of Venus rise in the west?

Did you forsake another hour in bed and head off with your dog
to keep a dawn appointment in the park
to watch the trees identify themselves among the mists
and the roses arrange their colors from shades of gray
to yellow and red and redundant rose?

Did you escape the blaze of self-righteous reaction to morning news
and resist the weave of partisan rhetoric that erodes reason?

And did you remember to relish the solitary hour in the late afternoon
when the hummingbird returns to its nest?
And did you remember to neglect yourself for love of a child
or spend an hour with an aging parent with no regret?

Did you decorate your day with smiles?

Did you try not to make sense of the senseless in a world of reflections and glimmers and
pettiness
but to love it all anyway, maybe even concede the possibility of deity
even though it was far from self-evident?
Did you discover how extraordinarily intelligent you are and
how incredibly stupid?
Did you accept that most of what you lost, or did not accomplish
because of carelessness, or miscalculation or even loving too much
was not loss at all but rather another path which opened to new landscapes?

Will you at the end promise yourself that no matter what it holds
(the real end I mean with its darkness and aloneness)
will you promise
in your essential solitude, with no one left to impress, to say:
"Thank you, Life," as it melts away
like a rainbow fading after a summer storm
and you are here no more?