

Early morning Haibun

I woke at 2 a.m., on a couch in my sister's apartment in Boulder, my 6 year old daughter sleeping on a mat beside me. I am plagued here by jet lag and early waking. No, I must go back to sleep. I try all my usual tricks, listening to rain on my ipod, reciting rhyming poetry, feeling for my pulse in each finger, but my mind will not slow down. Finally I risk waking Rose by turning on a soft light. She doesn't stir. I pull out a volume of Chinese poetry I bought at a used book store yesterday.

When thoughts will not keep
I read Tu Fu and at last
My mind slows down, sleep.

People Watchers

Cat
ganet-eyed
 silently
 staking claim
 just watching
part form
barely visible whiskers
seventh sense
beyond our ken
 what is there
 will we ever know
 after now

Dog
ever true
 each smell is
 either us or
 another
what is it like
to wait so long
what happens there
without us
 one day
 we'll be together

forever

This Room

after John Ashbery

This room is where I write my dreams and days.
On the table: Shakespeare, Poetry for Dummies,
a mug of tea.
Sometimes words take off and glow.

Mostly they just sit on the page, scowling
Surely you can do better than this?
I am only telling you this because
It may happen to you.

To Guilt

You rear up
 on either side
Loud as we
 defend ourselves
You insist
 There must be
Something wrong
 To scare love
So deep inside

Two ages

twenty-two
unadorned beauty
 smooth youth
 all about
 the tooth of
desire (insert wolf whistle)
soothed by
Schubert and
the hope of
 someone who
 would woo and
 then be true

forty-six
two children
 mini-van
 invisibility

skin slowly
dessicating
time ticks quickly
illuminating
the gift of
serenity
stillness
life shimmers