

Sunflower Eyes

Eyes for Bleeding Light

I've heard tell of a tree stump
cut clean, where the moss is deep
and the lichens creep and I hoped
that I could take my turn.

So I wandered through the forest
with my notebook and my pen.
My backpack full of honeycombs.
My mouth, the bees.

And while the water faucets ran
down the spines of surrounding fence posts,
I jawed and staggered up that
hundred-year-old thing.

That clean-cut stage in that
old wooded glen where butterflies reek,
I stumbled and swaggered and I drank and I drank
and I wrote myself a poem.

I drizzled a line and the sea-foam rose
over roots gnarled clockwise
by years of scraping up against the dirt.
Tripped up by wooden webbing.

I coughed up a character,
a galaxy, or a rose, and the wind
swept silver pollen across the pallet
of my skin, and I felt empathetic.

And when the rose browned for lack
of nectar, a phoenix stopped by.
My poem's body was busted
and the bird cawed through flare lips.

I sketched a man whose shoulder was borrowed
from my own and the stinging hail
was the bullet I wrote through it,
and I swore loudly in front of the rabbits.

But there was a summer bird who sang
of missing darkness, and with it
that earthy worm which maps out
paths to brightness, and warmth again.

I turned to light from my pen,
maybe through a hospital room,
and the tulips bloomed concentrically.
Running wildly to light up my stump.

I climax and I close and I lay with the bugs.
The whippoorwill wallops as I sleep.
The daisies and darkness strike to fire in the night
and cover my laughter in ferns.

One Million and One Times, A Liar

I was tongue fisher;
Late night sword spitter. If you
were a child hiding hookworms
because sickness feels somehow
like failure.

But perhaps you were
that nights owls take
pride in their endurance.
Like rocks behave like pissants
when smashed
against much larger rocks.

Maybe then I'd be frost tiger
or Mr. loses track of time.

While you can be crippled sun
flower – lover, bent
over blackness you're doing
your best to hatch.

And on nights when you call me,
again,
I'm that man in your backyard,
tearing horribly at the roots
you let clog up your dirt.

The prettiest kinds of lies are
about tiger lilies
and smell like warm asphalt
radiation, and the sighing
lights.

Until you die
I'm knee deep
outside your window.
Ripping flowum from
woody stalks.

Things I See in My Shower Door

Beginning with the glass
And its wetness.
Like a heaving breath petri-dish.
“Crept” is a word for such things
Like the Kuiper belt, or air, or
That you can know something,
Not know it, then know it again.
Soft-shelled bullets race away
In panes, planes to know flatness,
Like imagining time in terms of time.
In acting, we ask “by whose watch”
As water locked in shower glass
Is pressed by depth he’ll never know.
Which brings about clichés linking
Ignorance, bliss, and palisades
But if I and we are depthless water
Droplets, whizzing in pressure-shaped
Space curved flatly in glass kissing lovely,
We’re fucked.
And slender, and vain, and in a shower door.

What I Meant to See in My Shower Door

I forgot to start with wetness
Because I hoped to hold the pressure
Like December, to feel humid
On carpet dusted evergreens.

But let's talk about the wetness.

And how, by racing through
Evaporative space we spread
To safe distances.
We marked-up distant valleys
Of the rug.

I think maybe then we'd forget the kissing
Glass, and move in that slippery pattern of
The wind.

I'll meet you in the shower drain,
Ill kiss you in the vacuum hose.

Remember -
We are not water, we are not a Christmas tree.

But these are things I see.

Fourth of July

We hop-scotched away
From all-American fireworks
In Reeboks over dew-drip grasslands
Behind the Ferris wheel.

We skipped past the snow-
Cone cart, Timmy's mom yelled
Something, but we were in the darkness
Of cul-de-sac electric lamps.

And Ryan tripped Alex when
The hill fell before us,
So we threw ourselves down
The almost slick grass
And tumbled to a little safe
Place beside the sewer drain.

Johnny found his lips on Becky's
Cheek while Alex lit fire crackers
And Timmy tossed the football to
The moonlight and the dew crunched.

I stole a look back at the fire sky
And the edges of the horizon curled
Like parchment under coals.

A firefly whistled by
And I'm sure she whispered
Something about pixie-dust
So I followed.

My candle-guide pressed flat to fit
Past tree trunks, and offered
Her hand to pull me along

Her hair exploded amber
In the glade
And her human form was lovely

The satyrs danced jovially
Over meadows.

Zephyr and Cloris
Sang harmony in my ear.

Lady Firefly took my hand
And led me onto the grass-floor
To waltz with the Nymphs

We danced the night away
Singing of Neverland
And lavender.

Somewhere the sky still burned patriot.

They will be fine without me.