

Ecology of Beauty

A guy easing his way
Across the surface of the planet
I notice, he's all proportioned,
Contoured, exposed
My eye is caught, ever so briefly
To take this in.
I am buoyed by shape and motion.
Light does an excellent job
Of revealing the comforting subtleties
Telling me about strength
Giving an antidote to fear
Suggesting things may move
In a good direction.
Just noticing gives inspiration,
Replenishes the air
Creates a cushion between things
Reducing friction, adding grace
So don't forget to notice beauty,
Hammocks drooping between
Eucalyptus trees with
Dripping waxy pungent leaves,
And curling pink bark,
Bold trucks, babies, boys,
And other delights.
And replenish empty pockets with
An inspiration of grace.

Sometimes Things Break

A bird's neck,
A favorite dish,
Something pretty,
Precious
Perhaps once alive.
Fragile bones are built
To bear only the force
Of wholeness
No more.

But when the zeal
Of feisty will ignites
Watch out! Crack!

And there you are;
too late for prayer.

The dish in two.
The fish floating.
The switch is flipped
And life has slipped
From is to was
For good.

The bird in hand,
Multi-colored flutters
Stilled.

Lonely Uncle Brian

Drowned as Ophelia in a watery grave, washed away, swept, snagged, pulled, dragged. Brian's poems were not in vain, surfacing, leaf by leaf in cleaning out his room.

Closets full, drawers spilling and boxes stuffed with copper pennies wrapped in paper with rubber bands and ladies underwear and poems coming up from down inside and under,

Where leaves of tender white slapped with stark bold black old typewriter ribbon seeping ink like fissures from their shape of meaning.

Brian did not live in vain, lonely Uncle Brian, leaving a trail, a vein, an artery spewing simple poems, average and true rising like mist from the water.

A Reckoning

That night on TV, I watch
A cello player part with her instrument.
Her face pale,
Her long hair and blouse are beige,
Everything about her is shades of beige.
She considers the value of her cello.
The bow, the first to be appraised.
Sitting stiffly, she waits to hear
The dollar value,
Cello leaning against a prop table,
Having been pried away from between her knees
At the time of the decision,
A baby given up for adoption.
She sits upright, slightly parted legs,
Softened by the liquid fall
Of the classical musician's skirt
One foot just in front of the other, still
Leaning into the arpeggios.
The grinning, suited host
With the dollar signs in his eyes
Studies the curves of the rejected body.
She waits,
Almost remembering to breathe.
A huge account is being balanced in her mind
About the tradeoffs she's made in her life,
And the anxiety in the anticipation of
Affixing a price tag to all of those hours.

Lay Down Your Arms

Focus on the movement,
Not on the meaning
Of the laying down of arms.
I feel the gentleness of the movement,
The sensation of the sweetness in the limbs.
The harmony of my whole being.
I lay down my rifles, my semi-automatics,
My daggers, my swords,
My anger in meanness of language,
All melted in the slow motion
Of the laying down of arms.
I surrender to that gesture.
How the slowness attracts my attention!
The genuflection to place the weapon
Onto the cool grassy earth
Is a release, a freedom!
It is a proper supplication
To lay down arms and to bow to life itself.
Bow to the simple grass growing without fanfare.
Lay your arms there.
Wrest trickery from your heart
Let it be freed from your will.
Set down your machinations in the junkyard of weaponry.
The movement is revealed in gowns of black,
In gauzy pants, in worn jeans,
Cotton T-shirts, and strapless shoulders
Revealing the strength in yielding,
And the muscularity of gentleness.
Breathing together

As we lay our arms onto the earth.

The earth can receive.

The slow movement becomes peace itself.

A gentle jostling in the cells

Bones are luminous

Blood is rich

As we gently lay down our arms

Onto moist earth.