

November 2016

A supermoon rose early the other morning, but I didn't see it.  
It's not that I wasn't up and about; I just couldn't find it.  
Like that damn tree, always falling in the woods when you're never around.  
the one that does or doesn't make a sound.

Anyway, the biggest moon in years, so close to the earth that I should have felt  
its cold, silvery breath on my naked neck, but it was nowhere in the sky, as far as I could tell.  
I guess it rose over an open field somewhere around here.  
Others saw it. I know, because it was widely reported. So it must be true.

Remember when we thought that the moon was made of green cheese?  
Maybe that was true; you can't be too sure anymore.  
Truth no longer means what you think it does.  
You don't need to check the dictionary. Trust me.

You know the folk story.  
A fox, being chased by a wolf,  
convinced the wolf that the moon reflected in a well was a wheel of cheese,  
and the wolf, to get at the cheese, drank until he drowned.  
And the fox got away.  
Stranger things have happened, as we all now well know.

Maybe if The Pythia were still around, she could have read the signs.  
Although, she was pretty good at hedging her bets  
with a little ambiguous punctuation.  
The apocalypse, as it turns out, is not the final destruction of the world;  
it's the final destruction of the word.  
What a difference a letter can make. Like a comma, or the lack of one.  
Just ask The Pythia.

It's no wonder, then, that the pundits got it all wrong.  
Apparently, we all should have been reading tea leaves and Tarot cards  
instead of newspapers.  
As Cromwell told us a long time ago,  
if you assume the probability of something happening is zero,  
you're setting yourself up for grave disappointment.  
Actually, what he said was  
"I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible that you may be mistaken."

Meanwhile, the moon, that old devil moon, keeps pulling all the strings.

Then

There once was a time, but not so long ago that you can't conjure it up,  
and even now, breathe in its rooms redolent of tobacco and scotch  
and newly sharpened pencils and a hint of Chanel No. 5  
and if you just go through those doors there, leading to the patio, and sit down,  
you will feel the heat of the flagstones on the backs of your thighs,  
and taste the chlorine mixed with tears on your skin and hair  
as you bury your head in your pruned up little hands.

You will for a moment see in the light that shone then.  
A light that can only now be seen on the inside of your eyelids  
or in a faded photograph with white crimped edges  
or sometimes in a sideways glance in the mirror in the hall.

Back then, remember, men wore fedoras and ladies wore gloves.  
Can you see them?  
They were dashing, our parents, like movie stars.  
Magic.

You can even feel her cool mink sleekness and  
his starched cotton shirts  
unfolded from cardboard and tissue paper  
from where they lay in a drawer.  
You can touch them, as they kiss and brush past you  
on their way to a cocktail party.

Elegant creatures, they were then, another species,  
their brave and brazen beauty born of their dreams  
that they would make true, would not let go, would not let get away,  
They burn as brightly and as fast as the end of a lit cigarette  
and rise like smoke from a thurible.

## Selling the House

Sure, it's no Camelot, but  
the life that may be lived here's reflected in the price.

For purposes of clarification and full disclosure,  
the maybe's strewn on the closet floor like dirty laundry,  
the if's clinging to the entry hall chandelier like cobwebs

and the should's stuffed up into the attic  
do not convey.

There's lot of space for your own dreams and unrealized ambitions.  
We have no pride of authorship.  
Change whatever you like.

You can set the Christmas tree up there instead of here  
and the bar for parties here, not there  
and take your family pictures on the turn of the staircase  
rather than before the fireplace.

There's lots of room outside for games and gardens  
and to bury the family pet.

And while the master bath may be in need of a rehab  
the tub's still a perfectly good place to soak  
and have a good cry.  
You won't be heard.

Newton Street

On a winter morning  
in a woollen warm kitchen  
the boy balanced on a chair by the sink  
in footed pajamas  
leaned solidly into his mother's side  
his face pressed up against hers  
and saw through the window  
a bird's breath turn into a cloud.

Hobey

A boy I knew in school  
became a master puppeteer.

Pygmalion to an elegant woman  
crafted with exquisite features and the most expressive hands.  
He is her attentive audience and  
watches her movements  
as if each tilt of her head and gesture  
were a complete surprise.

Flat, black, paper figures  
come to life in a world that exists only between  
the light and the scrim.  
A man with articulated limbs  
trimmed with foxfire gathered from the forest  
glows in the pitch of the evening,  
his dance a seeming celebration of emancipation,  
as if there were no strings hidden in the dark.  
Wood nymphs with wizened faces  
at once old and young, balance on leaves of grass  
and then leap.  
Otters swim in streams; geese fly in formation.  
An eagle soars above cattails in a marsh.  
He is under them, beside them, above them and below them.  
He is in them, with them and yet  
he is not.

I think he is well pleased  
when all we see is what he has wrought  
and he becomes invisible  
like a gentle god.