

Reflection on my Son

For you, who have years to decide,
each second is weighty, each minute slow.
You, luminous,
don't have the words, but perceive a tree by each leaf,
fields by each blade of grass.

From the earth you emerged,
a clear, quiet trickle first,
then spilling out
among the undergrowth,
where leaves and ferns and twigs
tangle with you, rivulet,
on your way, some
yielding to your native force, some
nudging your path just so.
You glisten, leave wet traces as you pass.

You may pool for a time,
sweetly reflecting your small world,
and I may sit and enjoy your stillness.
You may, just the same,
rush down ravines never mapped,
mingle with rain, leave us to wonder.

Now, sounds rattle your tiny ears,
this world too loud and cumbersome, built for giants.
Each action, reaction foreclosing another, you move blithely,
not bothered by this constant end of the possible,
by knowing you may only move downhill.

We, giant rivers, plod through valleys
Our watersheds foretold,
collecting and discarding particles,
minutely changing our banks,
Carving out our meandering route to the sea.

Who are you, child?

Over my coffee, I grow quiet.

Who are you, child, in a photograph
with a twisted face?

Do you deserve better,

or,

if our fortunes reversed,
would you wonder this of me?

Where am I with you
through miles of plastic waters
and foreign dirt?

Through complexity, the likes of which
is uncharted?

I know your expression well,
your pain less.

Ode to the Lobbyists

The black suits slip by,
caricatures of themselves.
Oh, these well-oiled men!

Pharaohs

It takes longer for the pharaohs
Sheltered thus from the forces that weather
the surface of their tombs---

Some blow away too soon
Forgotten or impossible to mourn.

My mother's body, like so many,
 lay clothed and boxed
in the hope of holding ground.

When I go, I will be ready
 to be scattered where I fall
in company with many
 minute to fearsome, who could not go on
but relented, resigned, to the earth's embrace.