

Saturday, October 5, 2013 - Santa Anas

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May.
- *Wm.Shakespeare*

What would Will make of October
in southern California? The Santa Anas picked up
yesterday, dried sticks and leaves everywhere -
my garden autumn havoc. Enough
my sinuses go wild, dry air, pollen,
but the rattling blinds would have kept us awake;
we opened them last night; early I closed them
and the window allowing Becky to sleep in late.

Still, the sky's been swept blue;
I see fewer cobwebs - the orb webs
I expect fall mornings, well, true
to their instincts, the spiders have crept
away. An easy day, with chores
complete, snug to stay indoors.

Araneus Gemma, near a garden path

I crossed before the Byron climber trellised over my garden path
and interrupted the orb spinner's work. She, magnificent,
was nearly finished, her web up in a corner of the bush. A few gnats
already caught, she spun to make the web secure, her error the anchor
to the David Austin opposite the path; I snapped it. She fled.

In the flash before she disappeared to the tangle of my rose's thicket,
I glimpsed her web, her mummied gnats, and her. Her abdomen an inch,
her legs spanned two. Not seen since, she likely made
a tasty meal to one of the mockingbirds that frequent my summer gardens.

The Rose Garden, Night, Full Moon

Full moon lights the rose garden,
casts green day's leaves and canes
in gray. The blooms, careful pinks, bold reds,
gradated lavenders and purples, just gray;

white roses alone hold true, reflecting
the moon from the back to where I stand.

Little moves; a moth flits cane to cane,
likely a spider spins a web; all this
invisible in the half light the moon provides.

Back in bed, soon I quiet to sleep,
her small breath close though distant in this dark.

Petroglyphs

V Bar V Site, near Sedona, AZ

I. A Journey

The sun chased the stairsteps up the mesa.
Rising slightly, it casts light differently,
and the stairsteps disappear. Visible or not,
the steps remain, migrations remain, whether
to or from a destination, fleeing or embracing.

The spirals the journey spins from, crevice
or city, wasteland or teeming womb, bless
this travel, open the path, point to or from,
and only on arrival looking back, we carve
our way, chip at the varnish, mark our place.

II. Walking Man

I've been walking for sixty years, from or to.
I rarely knew my place until arrival.
Then, I worked, stated will or question,
often left a mark and kept my place.
Sometimes I knew the plantings, the good I did.

I still walk, The sun this morning marks
a path, if only for an instant. I go
forward. Looking back is only salt
or Hades, bitterness or regret. The path climbs
upward, always upward, the destination stars.

III. Kokopeli and His Mate

The hump-backed flute player has found
his mate, a fertile valley for their plantings,
shade along this tree-lined cliff base.
Wherever she resides, he can rest,
ply his cheerful music or that or others.

The beauty of his day he finds in her eyes.
The fruit of their being lay inside her.
And where the journey continues or ends, in rest
or travel, in the heat of the trail or cool shade,
a tree beside clear waters, he finds home.

Noli temere

- the last words Seamus Heaney tapped out, according to his son Michael, speaking at his father's funeral in Dublin, September 1, 2013

I would convey such grace, concern myself with others
even as I pass my moments last upon this earth -
"There's nothing to fear" - "Fear nothing" - the angel's
reassurance to shepherds past their understanding.

Could I give that confidence, no or little faith
required to contemplate resurrection, reunion, whatever
mysteries await, complete my days here,
but then I'd know as two fingers and two
make four. I'd know as surely as I love those
I entwine within my daily life,
I'd know and lose that great and last surprise
we wait and plan and contemplate towards God.