

## Left Side of Nowhere & Other Poems

### LEFT SIDE OF NOWHERE

Swing little children swing  
Pump your legs as hard as you can  
Use your small pistons to propel  
you higher and higher  
Keep straining to peek over the treetops  
Keep straining for a glimpse  
beyond the left side of Nowhere

Swing little children swing  
Spin tightly on your memories  
The tire seat has been shredded  
and recycled into shoes  
for anorexic aging debutantes  
who belatedly want to serve the earth  
The rope is frayed from the noose  
it made to strangle the sounds of silence

A cruise ship rests in the harbor  
disgorging its passengers spewing out  
the remnants of an undigested meal  
You dream of someday being swallowed  
by the steel and then vomited onto  
the faraway shores of the right side  
of somewhere lulled by the smooth  
engines droning like a horde of bees

A sad wreck of a car snaps you to attention  
it sputters putt-putts backfires  
belching out a puff of smoke sending you  
rolling for cover under a dumpster  
Amazing how the backfire resembles forward fire  
of a gun waving wildly from a window in a drive-by

Driven to madness when hope committed suicide  
Slashed its wrists with shards of glass  
from the mirror of life The mirror told the children  
that Nowhere was the fairest until the grandmothers  
made pipe bombs to blow the graffiti off the schoolhouse  
and the grandfathers took the rope from your swing  
to hang their decaying dreams

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It was a mercy killing  
like blind fish from underground streams  
who could not function in the light  
and they are now paving for the roads  
in this neighborhood of blind children  
who cannot see over the walls  
surrounding their ghetto

Mother made it through the maze  
of blind fish alleys She is  
blinded from staring into the sun  
straining for a glimpse of her faceless children  
peeping over the highest branches

Mother keeps whispering chanting  
Swing higher children swing higher

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MELANCHOLY MEMORY

White is her color  
Freckles dotting pale skin  
of a young teenager  
Big sister

White is the collar  
topping her blue dress that  
matches sleeping eyes of  
my sister

White is youth's color  
she said once when I cried  
to be like her be the  
big sister

White are fresh flowers  
daisies and carnations  
Roses never suited  
my sister

White is her casket  
Color of purity  
Angels gently enfold  
my sister

NEGATION

As autumn settles  
like a mantle across her shoulders  
the dancer lowers herself gracefully  
to the leaf-littered ground  
curls her still shapely  
yet heavily veined legs to one side  
exposing bruised knees  
plucks her veils free from their clasps  
with nimble fingers and offers  
their wispy worn fineness in trade  
for a taste of the honeyed  
once forbidden confections  
tumbling over the rim of the pottery bowl  
held by invisible hands

TWILIGHT HANDS

She hummed the dawning of the day  
while spry hands bounced babies  
Wielded a spatula with expeditious  
movements flipping pancakes onto a plate  
Folded napkins at place settings

She was in full swing at noonday  
as brisk hands folded lunchmeat and bread  
into sandwiches Smoothed the creases  
from pages of homework Kept the iron  
moving in a pendulum motion over  
the mounds of spanking clean laundry

She talked with her hands  
gesturing wildly with excitement  
Administered slaps to unruly kids with her hands  
She took all gossip with a grain of salt  
Tossed a pinch over her shoulder  
with a cupped hand just in case

With reverent hands and nimble fingers  
she daily turned the pages of the good book  
unerringly finding the appropriate Bible verse  
Now a smattering of age spots dusts her smiling  
frail countenance aglow through paper-thin skin  
And mother folds her twilight hands

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TOMORROW I WILL WRITE

Soggy skies    clouds the gray of  
dingy white clothes on laundry day  
Rain drips    a leaky faucet gathering slowly  
in cupped leaves    forming quivering puddles  
A crow's ebony feathers shine as if freshly oiled  
Wet foliage glistens in early morning flashes of lightning  
There is nothing to inspire me today  
Tomorrow    I will write a poem

The leak intensifies    clouds darkening from gray to black  
shifting and stacking on themselves  
The pipes burst    a deluge slapping the window panes  
Wind driven branches scrape the roof  
Flowers bend double    shield petals with long leaves  
Thunder rolls like a sack of marbles spilling  
onto a wooden porch    drowning out my thoughts  
Tomorrow    I will write a poem

I arose this morning    raging against a dry spell  
anticipating being inspired by a walk in the meadow  
hoping the beauty of a late summer day would bring  
the words tumbling from my pen  
Instead I watch the world slide gently from sun to shadow  
see thirsty grass being pummeled by pellets of rain  
As I watch    the dry earth becomes greener  
There are only so many ways to describe green or wet  
Tomorrow    I will write a poem