

Sparingly

I came to the salvage yard
to look for a spare tire
A lone wheel left on a wrecked car
to fix up, keep inside my trunk

I a lone woman
walking in the playground
of a man's world
I am a single spare nobody wants
Will anyone come look for me?

I'm hiding in the shadows
at the far end of the world
watching couples from a walking distance
I'm spared their fate
of constant accountability

The money in my account is sparse
Its fate is constant freefall to zero
But zero means no more no less
Nothing gained or lost
Nothing left to lose

So shouldn't I fall in love with feeling free?
Yet I spar with that whole emotion
Fight these thoughts of being caught
between nothingness and singleness
Between the zero and the one

But a spear through the whole leaves fractions
Spurned fragments never summed
Divide the number, carry the one
Get the answer with the remainder:

A spare tire on a car
no one else found that I want

Game Peace: An Epistle To An Exiting Office Manager

The chessmen in the office
move exactly in the manner
that you said they would
You as Queen B of our company
trained me thoroughly
You offered up your expert eye
on workplace politics
Taught the rules, broke down your tricks:
How to double deuce an underling
to do much more than asked
How to trump a manager into a joker
Stoke an average Jack to fire with your poker
How to backhand club your protégé
across the forehead with your subtle style
of snippy snarky kindness
You know –
the kind that doesn't have a heart
But for your part, you showed us all
how good you are at corporate ball
You've been benevolent enough
to bequeath your sacred playbook
to this diamond in the rough
thereby making me your pawn
Now that you're gone,
we will breathe deep
Say goodbye to the gameboard
you had us tip-toeing on.

Sonic Psalm

Speak Lord; Your servant's screaming
My ears - they bleed to hear Your voice
cut the cacophony of chaos
in my mind. Say something, God
Make soft the silence here outside of me
that kicked the volume in my head
up to a heightened hell of decibels
My only counter 'gainst the clamor
is to make noise of my own
but my high-pitched feedback whine
unnerves my spine, so Lord of order
won't You whisper now Your word
to resonate within my life

Commencement Address
(for the students at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte
and all those graduating in May 2019)

We're so proud of you, senior class of 2019.
Your academic training rivals any that we've seen.
Our country hungers for your gifts and talents that it lacks
in business, research, education, mass shooting attacks.

We've armed you with all of the information we can give
so should an active gunman come on site, then you might live.
But we're impressed with what you've crammed and thought through on the fly
like sitting quiet, playing dead until police come by.

You're practiced and adept at making shields and barricades;
You've deemed that knowledge tantamount to high scores and good grades.
For your class took to heart the charge directive "run, hide, fight,"
and down the road you won't know when those skills will come to light:

a school, nightclub, worship space, festival, or concert hall.
With instincts honed during lockdowns, we hope you survive all.
So take these lessons you've accrued to every job you choose,
and teach coworkers what you've learned, but pray they need not use.