

I'm Sorry Sylvia Plath: *Metaphor*

I am a riddle in ten syllables,
A mad scientist, extracting symbols,
Mining for the meaningful metaphor.
Pinning each down for examination.
Chalk-dust fingers command glaze-eyed zombies!
For this they roll and writhe in their cold graves
Awaiting the summons to analyze,
Critique, substantiate, suck the piece dry.
Poignant Plath cannot escape dissection –
Boarded the bus there is no getting off.

Yankee's Lament

I know it's only a Swamp Maple.
Not even a Sugar.
And the limbs are sweeping
long and low by necessity,
squeezed between the raised ranch
and sidewalk of a '78 subdivision.

It's just the heavy heat and shy breeze
make me believe for this savored moment
that I'm in the deep south where the willows
sway slow and soft and the moss gently
hangs down, tickles your shoulders,
surrounds you in that lazy drowsy drawl.

Sipping my sweet tea,
I try not to hear the power walkers
as their tight squadron passes
right outside my canopy.
It must be four if they're there.
I've got just ten minutes
until soccer practice pick-up,
groceries, and back by five.

But as I linger here
in my hide-away Maple,
I luxuriate, languid and limp,
finding true southern comfort
as I take my time.

Evidence

An inhale turns the heavy heliotrope.
The question, an exhale that
becomes the northwest wind.
Honeybees seize their prey, their love,
and the decree carries on that current:
*Hold us down, our roots conspire,
grow stronger together.*
Alabaster sprouts follow
earthworms, willing
rocks to rise
to anchor stems
to break that crust
and reach for those precious rays.
*Just try to silence us,
the world will reverberate
with our stirrings.*
Pines pierce the clouds,
shake needles free,
and hold their cones out
for tiny pine warblers.
They sing the truth before
disappearing in the boughs.
A crescendo of pink clouds
splayed apart by a flock
of circling chimney swifts
reveals that heated heart
which we all revolve around
one last time before
the whispered *good night*
swishes through
the new dusk.

Arachnid

It started innocently enough
at the kitchen window, over the sink,
I offered a kind gesture for a fellow life.
Cleaning out the kitchen crevices
and we surprised each other.
I pulled my arm back in revulsion,
cocking the rag for a quick kill.
But little arachnid you!
Scurried hurriedly awash in anxiety
your web suddenly erased,
your home effaced
neat corners now where
your soft layers once wrapped.
If you hadn't captured my heart
with your frantic dash back and forth
you would have died right then.
I felt your pain of loss
the confusion from the void.
I reasoned that if I let you live,
you would soon dispatch
the fruit flies floating
around the blackening bananas.
I granted clemency - stayed my hand -
while your web grew again,
I acquiesced.

But as I stand here today,
your pale veil has sprawled, usurping
the wind-fell tomatoes on the sill.
The backyard vista interrupted
with hovering bug carcasses
and cat hair trapped in your lair.
Too much! Too much!

I begin to clean your cataracts
out of my corners
when the early October chill
makes my hand resist
what my eyes now wish once more.
Today, we make a deal:
you are my muse
and your home is safe,
But as the winter approaches,
we must know that this can't last.