

Broken Jewels In The Sand

You are broken jewels in the sand,
though born a strand of living light.
Who'll rise and take you by the hand?

You want to know, to understand
the reasons for your doleful plight,
your broken jewels in the sand.

You've learned to live without demand;
you strain each day to make things right.
Who'll rise to take you by the hand?

It was fate, not at your command,
that shattered what once was bright.
You are broken jewels in the sand.

Together we can yet expand
beyond the loneliness and fright.
Will you let me take your hand?

Forget the years the clock has spanned,
There's time to shine before it's night.
You are broken jewels in the sand.
Let's go onward hand in hand.

splinters and shards

no matter how often i walk my land
how many times i bend to ground
to retrieve a shard of broken glass
there is always another chip
glinting on the surface

some beer bottle remnant
tossed there before we owned the place
before we fenced it or maybe since then
and i can't help thinking that the soil
is like my own flesh

that pushes wood splinters up and out
if given the time it needs
both bodies discerning what is foreign
silently objecting then rejecting it
in a slow relentless way

but it's different too
glass would lodge in my body forever
if not surgically removed
and a friend of mine has wood chips
twenty million years old dug out of a well

even if we are different
and the land isn't really mine
and though i've heard of human bones
thrust up by the earth
i'd like to believe we're still compatible

monument to sitting

i saw a woman sitting on a ledge
in front of her place on main street
a company house in smalltown montana
built when copper ruled there

she was heavy with slack skin of aging
her neckline white and exposed
above the scoop of a cotton blouse
legs sprawled after working in her yard

i thought first she was one of those statues
seen around the country these days
bronze versions of ordinary people
striking their ordinary poses

to confuse the viewer with false recognition
followed by delight in the illusion
and the funny idea
of a monument to the everyday

it makes so much memorial sense
for who sits around on a bench anymore
in front of their little house in town
resting and letting the flesh hang free

entiled

we laid tile to make dust visible
not hide it in rugged pile
so we know if the floor's dirty
we're allergic enough as it is

leonidas is proud of his work
the way he solves problems
levels the uneven spaces
uses the best grout and glueset

but we don't walk over him
that's why he works for us
we have an understanding
a mutual love of tile

most of the tile is from spain
we shopped together to pick it
it's a burnt burnished brown
varied mottled and veined

don't need any more secret dirt
to clog up our passages
create cysts in the brain
filled with the unspoken unseen

he's from el salvador no papers
we call him for all our projects
or he calls us when he needs work
he the ground material of our acres

he checks how the clay is holding up
no cracks in all these years
his wife joins him here while he works
sometimes they bring their chihuahua

we disregard the clatter and echo of it
because of how it fits together
the elegance of its geometry
it cools our bared feet as we walk

lately we have less work for him he's charging us more each time
his wife talks about deportations
we feel
accused

medical complex

when the elevator whooshed open
a few people walked out as expected
i readied myself to enter
to ascend or descend i couldn't quite remember
but more kept spilling out of the lift
as from a magician's top hat
elders in wheelchairs babies in strollers
the lame the halt the afflicted
overweight asians and underweight latin
a tabernacle choir of diabetics
a colony of colonoscopies
ladies with bandaged foreheads
men with enlarged prostates wearing enlarged jeans
cancer survivors and survivors of cancer survivors
pre-cancerous citizens soon to become survivors

i couldn't wait to be done with my appointment
whose outcome i wasn't going to remember anyway
so that i could reward myself with a blueberry muffin
or risk that doughy slab they call a plonk
at the cafe downstairs which is my favorite place
the best part of the medical complex
because after that i exit through the automatic doors
find my car in the outer reaches of the vast parking lot
with its best spots reserved for the disabled
or the abled who wangled a tag from their doctor

and i realize taking that long walk in the sun
i'm about as healthy as i can be under the circumstances