

In This Place of Beauty

In this place of beauty,
the air builds rooms
of textured detail.

In this place, each face
is serene, intent, or both.

In this beauty, my breathing is low
and soft like the sigh of the forest.

In this place, my heart dies
and revives within itself.

In this beauty, the poem speaks
to another purpose of breathing.

What a room is this room
of beauty I am in.

The Quick and the Night

Poetry is the occupation of
stillness in the flurry of being.

I am made still, after being
still by nature, still by desire,
still by the habit of my ways.

And now I am made still by
the encroachment of death.

Mortality takes up its other self,
as mortal death smiles at mortal life.

I am made still, not against motion,
not out of time, not in stolen truth.

To know this being made still,
matched with immortality's stillness,
I am made quick in the meeting.

The quick and the night
are the same delight.

Storm and Wonder

There are two moments
that reach in the lungs and pull
the breath out for greater duty.

To witness natural beauty,
and to proclaim love for another,
the lungs are disposed to the wind.

We inhale, and we exhale,
in greater proportion profound,
when the heavenly beast arranges
our lungs into storm and wonder.

This sudden conversion of small
into largest of all, feels right size
to one who knows it as normal
and never not divine.

The Pretense of Incidental Dying

When death is what one
anticipates, waiting dies.

“I’m glad you’re not dead,” a
friend says, and I happily agree,
but death is not my concern.

“Death takes care of itself in you,”
another friend once said, in the midst
of his slow suicidal dance of dying.

Analogies of life are left behind
when waiting dies, I come home to
no more waiting for abrupt death.

Now I can live in forever, without
the pretense of incidental dying.

Ordinary Grace

It is grace made ordinary,
to be where anticipation
once was, waving its flags
of warning and conquest.

Absence of anticipation
is not without interruption
from the self-induced future,
and not without reflection
from the self-enamored past.

Imagination has not gone into
a sealed box, but lives suffused
in the reality of every object.

My dreams are teeming with animals,
both ape and owl and a spare owl, too.

This arrival holds the door open,
until endless opening takes its place.

An Arrangement of Wonder

I am the man who spills his coffee
when I look at my watch for the time.

A force directs this arrangement
of days into a slight derangement,
as reordering implies a disordering.

Arrangement is an embrace
of range, a holding of what's
unheld in a form of acceptance,
a being in concert with the wild.

A note seems held in the throat,
and the sound fades at a distance,
I am one who knows what time means,
when my cup overflows.

As the Droplets Fall

To stand in the nature of what
is true, I lose interest in predictions
of what may come to be true.

With my feet on the ground,
and my toes in the earth, I can
sense that rain is coming or not.

This is not the future foretold,
but the present, that grows more
true to itself, as the droplets fall.

Magnetic Word Making

Racketed by disharmonies, I withdraw
to a few rooms and a garden plot.

Bachelored by the pursuit of
lovers, I retreat to the center.

My cluttered heart collects its
obstructions, even to its damage,
until it is cleared, and pumps
with original bravery.

Do you see how the life we lead
magnetizes our language?

I am mettled by armorlessness.

All the Parts of Love

All of what I love suddenly
invents a face before me.

My character is drawn to it,
as all of what I am invests
my heart with grace.

I cannot depend on who she is, any
more than I can depend on myself.

The luck of the moment is the
look of the moment's attention,
it gives and receives itself,
and I am found between.

All the parts of love are held apart,
when one is first infatuated, and
I call that part of myself *desire*.

Safe for the Sunrise

When one face of love fades,
what requires love to fade with it?

The sun sets, only in portion,
it doesn't jump its moorings.

If what I care for, slips my care,
why should I not care for caring?

I walk after her, some time after,
thinking my poem might introduce
this recognition that we might share,
ready to forget the poem,
in favor of its poetry.

She is gone where going goes,
and I carry my heart home in
my heart, safe for the sunrise.

Being Among Love

I return to where my heart
sees itself open, to see it open,
again, in this one way, among
all others, in the way of love
toward others, in my self.

I return to the scene
of the uncommitted crime,
with criminal intent, to steal
what's mine by divinest right.

What I possess, or even dream
of possessing, is only mine in
recognition of its constancy.

Being, in the love I already own
is what I seek in partnering my heart,
when delight, in no difference, follows.

A Piece of the Sky

For most of life, death is external,
a piece of the sky that might fall.

Until it appears within the profane
and sacred estate of the body.

And one's Greek chorus
sings aloud, or falls silent.

Immortality is returned to its creator,
like a borrowed work of art.

The physical accepts its inheritance
of time among the wonders and terrors.

Acceptance is a voice that soothes
the short-lived and sings the absolute -
what falls from the sky is peace on earth.

Composed of Peace

While fear is my choreographer,
I am called fearless, in this
imagination called the world.

Every day, some terror
scrapes my complacency.

I'm composed of peace,
as I'm overtaken by war.

I disbelieve my own truth,
until I forget to question it.

I am the ground, on which my fear
dances arabesques of doomed flight.

I am the air.

The Nameless Room

The room of poetry, grace, and love,
cannot be entered in their name.

This nameless room is not entered
by anyone who has a name.

I cannot willfully enter,
I cannot deliberately stay,
except, in name only, I try.

How tempting is that approximation
we call everything we think we are.

I find myself at the center of the room
that I never come in and never leave,
only when I forget the name of this life.

The Between

Every animal, that is not
keen to its own mortality,
slips into a domestication of joy,
a degeneration of eternity,
a comfort of illusion.

In our dulled wisdom,
we jump out of airplanes,
and we make heroic
the slaughter of war.

We tell our children that Grandpa
isn't dead, he's only sleeping.

My body is a fraternity of dying,
and I am its overseer.

In the last breath gone, and
the next breath not yet taken,
lies my death, and my freedom
thrives in the between.

The Bloom of Eternity

My not knowing of *past* and *future*,
lures me closer to greater reality
than any lesson I learn in their
classrooms of instruction.

The heart of a true poem
is the bloom of eternity
in the kiss of time.

I skip class to return to
the source of my education.

The Precious Shape

In becoming a shape of self,
I become other than my origin,
and I die, as the extraordinary
and the beautiful fade.

Troy falls, Helen dies,
this precious shape of self
is nearly nothing in comparison
to what shapes it alive.

In place of the name of the
Father, I become my being.

In my absence of self, I become
creation, creator and created.

What shall I compare myself to,
when comparison is the censor
of my incomparable being?

In Letters Left Behind

I will never know this
lover I call my being.

He eludes my capture,
he never appears when
and where I seek him.

I seek him in shadow, in
reflection, in photographs,
in letters left behind.

I hear him say to me, *to you,*
we are nearly one, but I am
one, even as I am you,
and you are one who
thinks we are one.

No Going Back

Man and Woman never left Eden,
they merely stopped being at
home, until *here* became *there*,
and Eden seemed lost.

A true poem, true love, or the state
of grace, that proves not to be true,
cannot produce a true poem, or
true love, or the state of grace.

There's no going back to paradise.

The Taste of Death

Now that the taste of death
is on my tongue, I don't need to
expect it or its effects to appear.

It is here, if not in full, in degree
enough to be recognized as it is.

I am dressed to suit the agelessness
I have never not been, to know what's
true and to know my self-inspired twin
and what I have been twinned to forget.

The Roomless Room

My earliest habit as a poet
was to describe the room I was in.

Now I see it was to be present
without time's furniture.

The room I now intend to describe,
is one I call the roomless room.

It is the same room, uncluttered of
the physical, unfurnished by thought,
open, current, timeless, empty.

It is the same room.

Witness to the Miracle

Every life is miraculous, every
person is witness to the miracle.

Each one's story is either witness
to the miracle or tries to claim it.

Claiming the miracle reduces
to a description of the witness.

My place in the presence
of the miraculous reveals
its impersonal gift.

Every witness to the miracle
is one to see the inseparable self,
and bask in its unreachable beauty,
at the will of no nameable reality.

The Porcelain Plate

I see the olive oily pepper slice
slide from the open face sandwich
to the porcelain plate below,
and I am home again in the
furnished room of my eyes.

My heart comes out to come in
to the ordinary in this room where
my roomless heart is at home.

In this roomlessness,
I witness the tiny details
of the endless emptiness
of the miraculous.

Before the Flame

Instead of the future,
anticipate the present.

Look not at what occurs,
but at occurrence itself.

This un-doing uncouples us
from who and what occurs,
and everything remains vibrant,
undiminished by expectation.

The non-fantasy, of what is,
embraces the flame in its fire,
before the flame is lit and after.

A Coin for Commerce

If I recover no gold from the mountain, and
still I sing its discovery, if I see the source of
the poem, and the poems that follow are mere
nuggets, or if each poem is a coin for commerce,
when their source is a range of unparalleled wealth,
what part is a quest for gold, what part is a quenching
of the thirst for gold, and what part is gold itself?

The Home of the Poem

I try to enter the home of the
poem, but it enters, instead,
the way the sun enters a room,
the body, the eyes, the heart,
the way all that is enters this
and that, and transforms them,
with no change and nothing but.

I speak of a room,
as I knock out the walls,
and build nothing in its place.

I cannot build a temple
in the middle of the temple,
except - here is a bench
to burn for candles.

The Purest Juice

Here are all the secrets,
rolled into one, secure from theft,
protected by their accessibility,
the source of every creativity,
the way to taste them all,
the purest juice
from the ripest fruit,
the moment of conception,
the nursery, and its generation,
the trip to the oracle's cave,
and the shock at the entrance,
to see eternity, by turning to see
from where we have come, right
here, where we are standing.

I Love You Before

I say, I love you,
to the presence that is
before anything occurs.

I love, before you,
I love, until you,
I love, within you,
I love you, before,
I love you, until,
I love you, within.

Our love is in the air
and in the blood that
breathes the air.

Our love is the air
and the blood.

Our love is neither
the air nor the blood.

Here on Earth

I seem to sacrifice something,
to leave entanglements at the door,
merely to be at peace, I seem to be
rocketed to the heavens, to marry the
moon, when no such marriage occurs.

I sit on a chair, and the room fills,
in the fullness of no time at all, at
home in the heart, here on earth,
where splash-down is simultaneous
with lift-off, in the orbit of this being.

In Warm Water and Bright Light

Language is the home of
secondhand reality, the land
of reference and invocation.

I glance at the form of my poems,
and I see the approximate words,
until I remember the bite of reality
in the spirit, where every image
is pulled to a black hole of
unspoken recognition.

Distinctions are lost in warm water,
bright light, music, and delirium,
in the orgasm of creation, and
in the simple reality of being.