

Poems

Larry Gavin

Simulacrum

Sunlight trickles through basswood
And comes to rest like a spirit on water-
Patching it in light and shadow.
A minnow, grateful the blue heron
Was frightened into the air,
Returns to lip an agate in the shallows.
A leatherback turtle, up for air,
Floats downstream. My eye
Meets his, and he dives
Disappearing in a clear green pool.
We are all here, and up to now, singular.
No community of the commons. No
Understanding of one another aside
From what is on the surface
Obvious to sunlight
And each obvious to itself as it is.

School: May 2011

I forget exactly what it
is we are making here-
under crackling fluorescent bulbs
and against dirty walls.

At Tol-O-Matic, the machine shop
on Washington Avenue ,
I made cross-hatched brake discs
on a Blanchard grinder.
The good ones were shipped
all over the world, and the junkies
nodded out at the drill presses,
and production kept going up.
At lunch they shot up in the parking
lot, or rushed to Depot Liquor
to buy pounders of Colt 45 in cans.
They tossed the empties over
a fence by the alley, and the pile
was eleven feet high on the ninth
of July. I measured it.

Here, the network is down.
We circle ourselves like NASCAR
drivers and dream of getting
air born. The hallways echo
with the sound of data...
with the sound of what might
have been if we had only imagined
better.

Today, I give blood in the gym
and think: "Blood is like poetry
beating on, and out, gradually filling
something up, or emptying
something out." It is May, but I
don't sing today. I just put on
the same smile I've worn all week.
"Let's not reinvent the wheel,"
Someone says, and I think, "No,
let's reinvent the wing!" and fly
once again, too close to the sun.
Who cares if we fall?

Hailstones

Until finally, by their own weight,
Hailstones fall. They bounce,
Turning in air, bounce earthward
Distant as another planet.

I plant them in the garden
Out back. By autumn they
Have grown into monuments
Of stone - small kisses on
A distant land.