

STILL

When there's nothing to say there is still
this to say, still there is this like a
birdbath in someone's yard in your
childhood, not your birdbath or your yard
and no birds now, or rainwater yet, just this
palm, this listening for the rain, this memory
of a waiting place made of stone for the birds--
if they come--to drink from the rain after
a rain. When there's nothing to say there is still
this asking, this open upturned face, this mouth
waiting to collect the first few drops,
this hopeful, trembling tongue.

TO BE

We are all hiding in the world.
The rich are under the impression
they hide better than the poor.
The beautiful are so well hidden
it takes our breath away. I love you
means I could hide myself in you
forever. And what in the world
are we hiding from in the world anyway?

HAPPY

The dog isn't happy
unless its head is
sticking out the car window.
The man isn't happy
unless his head is
happy.
The man and the dog
have this in common,
thinks the man,
driving around with his dog
in the backseat, nose
in the wind, happiness
in the air.

SASE

To the wars of the poems
we send off our loved ones
with letters of introduction
to speed them to glory,
but they die on the front
desks of the sycophant
assistants-to-the-assistants,
and the notes read Sorry
that drape their faces.

UNCLE

For all his bluster
there was a sweetness
of surrender about him
that rose up like a shrug
when he rested from being right
the way the bulldozers and backhoes
at a construction site at dinnertime
are all finally perfectly still,
the tines of their buckets
pointing upward from the ground.

UM

Thoughtful
younger
brother of
Om.
Handsome.
Secular.
Deferrer.
Bowing
deeply,
prosody's
plié,
making
ready
to leap.



UNCLE UM IS STILL HAPPY

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