

HOT POEM OLD POEM COLD POEM: poetry out of order on *Rainier Corner*

III.

when no one is at this beach weekend, the Adirondack chairs all sit empty sidelong to the railing; if the sun were out, they would be casting shadows over the potted Pampas Grass that no one has watered—still; it goes on with itself like that, existence having only the one requirement. The cold gray ash that has collected in the bottom of the BBQ is the same color as the fog, which holds everything this morning, no one saying: "It'll burn off." Not even once. It's a small relief to no one, believing that these words might be true. The smell of grilled salmon forgotten by every nose involved with that. Obviously, there are no tracks for the ocean to wash away...and no sandcastles too. Instead, salty water wipes clean a clean slate, repeatedly, again and again—an Etch a Sketch turned upside down and joggled endlessly—because there are no half-finished drinks sitting forgotten on the deck railings of this beach weekend. The playing cards on the kitchen table are tightly packed amongst themselves, inside a small box the exact same size and shape as they are. Instead of their shuffling snap, there's the sound of an empty refrigerator when its condenser ticks on and off, keeping condiments cold enough to last until the next beach weekend. Also, the clicking of the automatic timer, when it turns the reading lamp on at the end of the day, once again lighting the loveseat before turning itself back off when dawn warms the drapes. A loveseat now unlit, completely without need of reading light until there is the soft warm thump of a car door closing in the driveway, the trunk being popped open; footsteps ascending the wooden sand-worn stairs, and then the sound a key makes against the pins of a tumbler. The fresh ocean air breaches the shut-in air, blooming smells, and the curtains are drawn back on another beach weekend...

II.

there are five of us living here
in the Spirit of St. Louis

drinking wine and eating beans

but I'm glad there isn't a sixth
because there would be no room
for a card table

and when you are living in the
Spirit of St. Louis
for six of eleven months

you need diversion

because dreams are great
but you can't hold soup in them

ideas are superb
but they don't keep your ears dry
when it rains

ask any of us living here
in the Spirit of St. Louis

it leaks like a boat
built by desert people

who know only water
in uncertain ways.

I.

You are in every person that passes.
You are in every smile, every frown, every Bengal light.
You are in every tree and every leaf on every tree.

Still, don't believe me?

Then you are in every birdsong sung from every branch of every tree that ever was.

You are in every father's fear and love.
You are in every mother's fear and love, too.

You are in the fires burning within forests.
You are in the pollen, the seedling,
the sapling, all.

You are in the ashes because we are all in the ashes.
You are scattered across the plains.

You are a radio station's static at midnight.
You are the midnight.
You are the static.

You are in the Rubik's Cube on a bookshelf,
even that, too
so yes...

You are in the love left out on nightstands the world over.
You are in a half-finished glass of water sitting upon a sill.
You are the sunlight that just passed through it—
 into a friend's cupped hands that caught it as it fell.

And you are in the sidewalks,
 and now their cracks,
And you are in the telephone lines,
 and now their calls,
And you are in the city buses,
 and now their passenger,
And you are in the band,
 and now their song,
And you are in the dancers,
 and now their stage,
And you are in the café's at night,
 and now their chairs.

You are everywhere and you are in everything.

 And you still don't believe it's true?
 Do you?

Then lose yourself,
And there you'll be, too.