

some kind of relief

you watch her chest
labored ribs once heaving to breath
begin to subside and
imagine the chemicals floating in the 'IV'
have found the heart and were propelled
to the cells crying out in distress
“do something anything”
to take away the pain
replace the agony
an artificial sense of calm
the chemicals never touching your body
never floating in it's pathways
yet you found an odd sense of relief too
your battles, not being the physical kind
your breathing fine
your heart, aching less
just seeing her struggles decline
even though it means
she will die soon

a prayer to the sky

how do you calculate your love of water
when its wet touch is no longer reachable
when the sky no longer permits the clouds moisture
to dampen the fields and farms and flowers
to rain upon the roofs and roads
nourishing, cleansing, renewing and connecting us
to the earth, to the sky and to each other

we've not appreciated the sky's gift
even days we've cursed the moisture
for dampening our mood and forcing us inside
to contemplate its tap tap tap on our shelter
both irritating and mesmerizing

there are oceans of water a
wetness accessible to touch, still
a moisture meant for animals of the deep
not to dampen the thirst of those who
reign on two legs.

so pray to the sky that one day it will again
allow the clouds to borrow from the oceans and
manufacture for us the clean clear cloying element
we love so much

immeasurable

El Capitan's sheer granite walls rise
a thousand feet from the valley floor
it's firefall appearing only
once each year
it's existence spectacular
in this dry weather world

yet my picture does no justice
a notion of this natural beauty before me
being not what the hand that created it
desired

even the conjured images of my failed words
seem fiction, reflecting not the properties of truth
one wishes to convey in ordinary discourse

what to do when an overwhelming want
to share a thing of immeasurable awe and wonder
unfolds and only I am here to witness this vista
of startling effect

possibly it's then realized
or maybe you already knew
the immersive aesthetics of some things
are best shared
when we are breathing the same air

a happy new year

how little I know this tiny goddess
she caresses the palm of my hand with
her tender smooth touch, her thin orange skin
teasing me with promises of the sensuous
sweet goodness I know will explode
across my mouth and tongue

when she was received, I didn't know her name
was it clementine? satsuma? maybe tangerine?
tiny cousin to--naval, clearly christened
an unflattering indentation, at least in my case
as if we share an umbilical connection
both children of the womb

the way of enjoyment is easy, if not disturbing
first removing her skin, a simple sinister act
the fragile delicate segments crushed
delivering her mellifluous serum
packing the power
to lift my spirits and my soul

how precious her skin too
dried, mixed with my tea
smoothing my wrinkles
lifting my chi
writing my poetry

no wonder she is revered and celebrated
shared by those who understand
that more than beauty
she expresses our ambition
for abundance and good fortune

the art of parenting

I remember being locked outdoors
my mother's last words to
"keep an eye on your brothers" or
"pee behind the garage," her way of telling us to
be responsible

we roamed over bridges, under over-passes
our energy unbridled, moonlight guiding us home
where a hot bath, a stern word
and a warm meal were there to greet us

I wonder now how my single mother managed
cooking, cleaning and paying bills
the thought she needed to decompress
not registering until I became a parent

our children not allowed to roam freely
presumed dangers encroaching our home
they were chauffeured and chaperoned
not walking, a new norm
their lessons of life learned in this
managed micro climate

a new time for parent and child, we
attempted to nurture and negotiate, the
necessary skills learned on-the-job where
we were bound to screw up, no model to mimic
the hope of not breaking anything
nestled in our hearts

I watched my daughter, near exhaustion
soothing her toddler's tantrum with words
instead of warnings
"The difference with parenting today," she offered
seeing my confounded expression
"are higher expectations"

I took in for a moment this polite refrain, realizing
the world's made it more complicated again
the old out for the new
and I said to myself 'old man'
you had it easy"

my wife's obsession

In 1976, I watched TV clips of Woodstock
in awe as
we planned our Vegas escape
two tickets to see the King,

but I imagined myself somewhere else
a dairy farm in Bethel New York
there were cows mooing
filling the space between
licks of Jimi's guitar

and young women floating
flowers in their hair and
pot on their breath
dancing round me

my wife's arms pumping
prominent from her position
upon my shoulders

she passed me a joint
then removed her bra and
flung it to the stage

where her idol
an over-weight man in a jump suit
dabbed his sweaty brow and
sang her 'love me tender'
for the last time

daughters

I want--MY mommy
my granddaughter said
as if--WE didn't know
the same person

sympathy

a bird flew into my house
landing high on the window sill
it pitied the two-legged creature
flapping its arms in vane

homeless

sophia sang sentimental songs
seeing someone sitting sideways
along the highway

go-cart

sad fucking bastard
lost his phone on the track
oh-shit