

Ode II

Pour over—
coffee and novels both—
and take it in, the talking,
start-stop of stuttering laughs and
morning-words, little nothings
which sustain us.

Love never came in so easily
as the light which washes
underfoot, like waves.
Like water.

It's hard to be a saint in the city,
he sings, keys dancing, hi-hat
rat-tatting, but I beg to disagree—
the apartment is a holy place this
morning, and out in the street the bus
comes churning through the rain
like providence.

A mother,
tiny hand held in hers—
Spider-Man rain boots,
Spider-Man backpack,
Spider-Man umbrella
held high, casting them both
in the stained-glass glow.

Better than nothing, us
divining truth from myth, but
I grant you this:
nickel for pity's sake's
a pittance even to the pauper.

Joy

And when the year ends it ends like the last
with that firecracker whip-like
crackle and pop. The world goes dark
and then brightly blinds, out of sight
and in and out again like that half-asleep
early-morning light.

And the next day will be like this, not-quite-ready
to unwrap myself anew from out of bed. My head
like a stethoscope prodding your chest. My ear
to your heart, resting under cover of the
soft-washed sheet, chrysalis sodden
with last night's noise.

You, like me, find familiarity
in the metamorphosis. Born-again,
again and again. Sharper then, the light
as it cuts across from the windowsill
down onto you and me, and this is the real
beginning—

The getting-up, the starting-of-the-day,
the where-do-we-go-from-here that marks the heart
of all beginnings.

Maybe the world will wait for us.
Maybe the spinning, the thousands of
miles per hour will slow
for us now.