

## My Job is Listening to Birds

Gone is the wake up and get to work  
No more long drive in traffic spending frustration  
The cube is someone else's,  
I haven't opened yet  
I had anger  
For a long while over a year  
I did it all so well and now was useless to the cause  
That cause  
I listen for the mail now  
I listen for the heat to bubble up hot and banging  
I listen for neighbors coming and going and people  
walking their dogs  
I walk in the park now  
I walk through empty neighborhood space  
everyone gone to their cause  
or silent behind the curtains  
Cautious waves when a rare one is encountered,  
intent on the iPod  
or fearful glances behind a rolling pram  
as if I will spread the disease of unemployment  
to their unformed child.

## I Am Being Tested

I am being tested  
and I'm finding wanting  
in things I didn't want before,  
not wanting what I did before  
and knowing the difference.  
A plan of self-discovery is needed  
but I'm not interested.  
The person I thought I was does not exist  
and truly it's a little frightening  
to wonder what's really there  
when the wolf is not at the door.  
I think I have become the wolf.

Through no fault of my own I am getting calm  
Getting tuned to the moment  
Where I wanted to be, was afraid to be  
Against myself, against God  
Against knowing what I wanted  
What I can have now if I want it  
It is easy to sit here zoned with boredom  
Reading books to distract  
Having tea and measuring days with spoons  
And not measuring up  
So today I went outside in the new spring  
And watched my golden hair in the sun and breeze  
And the chipmunk who decided I was no threat  
I'd hoped it would climb up my tower and take  
the golden and white hairs to make a nest  
It didn't

I was left to wonder what this particular  
non-anger was  
To return to pre-employment naivete  
Where things could be so ordered  
and productive  
and working toward change  
But I know better now  
And what is that?  
It is not sadness,  
it is not depression,  
it is not anger,  
it is not waiting,  
it is not wonder  
It is empty  
And I am listening to birds.



## Upon Thinking of the Shortness of the Future

I have no skill at rhyming in conformance,  
I have no skill in conformance at all.  
And that has, at times, served me well.  
I am no slave to fashion, to thought,  
to technology gone wrong.  
I'm living on the ground, not up in the clouds.  
And yet this leaves me with the children  
getting old,  
the parents getting older,  
the grandparents dead.  
The end of time is beginning  
to take on dimensions of clarity.  
It seems a tunnel, the sides smooth  
and no place to hang a hat,  
a thought, a hope,  
a dream, or an aspiration.  
Is there some small degree of hope in regularity,  
in schedule, in habit, in conformity?  
I sigh. I cannot, even now,  
in the face of what is,  
bear to take the small comfort.

Please recycle to a friend!

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