

Just Before Summer

The sun is shining on the water
 not like so many diamonds,
 but like the sun, on the water.
 My children, slow to wake,
 bodies and minds tired, murmur together,
 looking for socks. I mistake them for angels,
 but it is no mistake.
 This June day stretches into its thickness
 of color. Green reaches for greener,
 blue inhales slowly, exhales blue, yellow
 wraps itself around the morning
 like a shawl.

Nothing more to say,
 Just Yes. Or Oh.
 Then...

Hobbled

Years from now, I wonder if I'll be able
 to recognize the irony of any of it, like how
 just when you had almost begun to accept
 my leaving, I ruptured my Achilles
 playing tennis with you, which was one
 of the only ways we knew how to manage time,
 and summer and Saturdays,
 given this fact of my leaving.

Years from now, when I think of how ready I was
 to go - to walk, run, even swim, if I had to,
 away from the weariness of what our love
 had become, I hope I will remember how,
 when the time came, the only way to leave
 was slowly and the only way to move
 was to hobble, one wavering, broken,
 brave new footstep at a time.

Bravo

And when, at last, September
 rolls around again, there is
 a wild flurry among
 the leaves who do all they can
 to show their appreciation.
 It's the greatest encore
 you ever saw in your life—
 just the shimmering,
 Honest Abe beauty
 of September, and the leaves,
 on their feet
 applauding.

Prayer in April

Just this morning,
 right as we clamored off to school,
 in the driveway, the bird—
 that startled baby bird...
 He was so frightened he'd lost his voice;
 his little, feathered head became more yellow
 with his quivering.
 We three took turns holding him.
 The complicity of our awe
 is what strikes me now
 and I hope I'll always remember it:
 how we dropped to our knees,
 how we took turns cradling him,
 how, for a moment, when he flew,
 we lost our voices, too.

For A Student In My Basic Writing Class

May I just say that I love you, Lauren Lonucci
 and that somehow your paper made me weep?
 You will find the words, eventually,
 you will learn to live with grief.
 Surely, your diction will improve.
 But your heart — your heart is home already.
 My young friend, you got this sentence wrong
 about eight different ways,
 but that bit about *permanent good-byes* —
 A+, A+, A+.

*Not only are permanent goodbyes the worse,
 but it is also one of the most horrible things
 about life in general.*

Excerpt from a student's essay, written,
 by the author's choice,
 on saying good-bye.

THIS BEING HUMAN

BY
LISA STARR



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