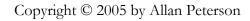


poems

Allan Peterson

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a right hand pointing chapbook

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Allan Peterson

Art Is Incurable

along with the one girl struck by lightning out of twenty six thousand in the stadium, a father falling down staring and unable to speak or recognize the room, an ant curled in its bite so thoroughly all is excluded but that act, the heat, the queen, my thumb coming.

Flora

In those words I am laden with flowers, abundant with being, bacteria. In those descriptions I am a garden, something fragilis, something elegans. A gracious host as if a hay infusion that could be producing a meadow: buccal, intestinal, beautiful in the light. And how in my plenty I might gold leaf America, or dismantle my roses to throw.

Allan Peterson

Forgetting Originals

One cannot study history fast enough or imagine, so much is missing faster than before. So I want to take Frances to Ozette to count mosses, the zig-zag joints of salal tacking to the coast before it's over, the old life, see elk wheezing and bellowing while there are some, remind children and visitors the razor clam was named for a look-alike, a steel blade they've never seen folded for safety in its case, a fibula, like a forearm touched back to its shoulder.

Revelation

Yanking smilax I received the gardener's stigmata a thorn through leather and found at the mailbox a rabbit like referred pain one side skinned by impact The anatomist foxes took it the first night I then saw a fisherman offshore and before he made it bait by the steel hook he lifted his arm to show me and a silversides frantically swam in his hand

Turning to July

Blue Jays flash down like pieces of Gulf Stream and drink from the pie plate. You can't make us out from the many salt water edges or the road. On eclipse day thousands of hidden cameras slip their efforts through the leaves and the acre is littered with moons bitten exceedingly. I turn the calendar to July a long blue lake in China. While waiting for October three landsats away I peek. It's the enormous Mississippi from the sky where toward the bottom at the Gulf someone unseen picks up the dipsy worm through their bare feet. Allan Peterson

The Roofs of Providence

In Providence, I opened a roof to see sunrise from stars, and the other roofs of Providence were all books including mine turned over, tented, so they could concentrate on rarity. I saw whatever had fallen, whatever was then thrown up from the bottom buoyed by gas, saw the gulls come, the laughers, the royal terns stroking like oars, saw our shortcuts, how gravity shapes our bodies, how the long black streets struggled to go straight.

Allan Peterson

Thanks

Seaside looking out over its nouns, arrow already moody for its taut string, the cured preparing milagros of silver, arms and eyes of copper washed in gold and mounted in a scene loaded with clovers, all thanks for recovery as when Cortéz was cured of a scorpion having had it foretold by burning a crutch and wooden leg before the Virgin, and so had a replica made by plateros discolored by venom and swollen in gratitude.

Emboli

Seeds were more trustworthy than he expected, generously bringing up things not planted: candyweed, violets, skullcaps; opportunity's host to diversity. Then there was grievance. The azalea died, magnolias browned as if tourniquets strangled their branches.

When the gardner went white, you couldn't tell him from gulls or the fiberglass Hatteras, the clot black as the nerve in this pencil as I write.

Allan Peterson

As If Painting

I took the broom, the brush on a stick and swept hickory yellows to the marble steps, swept all the colorful influences I can see from my window into windrows understood imperfectly as gravitation, as impasto, as the supposed governance of planets Jennifer charts over lattés at Guilts-A-Million.

Fluently

Awake I saw the wasp that stings hickory into a nursery and helped it choose the leaf for stinging and writing saw the spaces in the page we call rivers the words then flatboats though meaning does not run like my face flowing silently all night into and out of every window I pass

Psychodrama

Today a woman in frustration spoke to a gas pump and it spoke back saying depress the lever and try again So she told it how things went bad for her confiding an anger so deep that nearby sparrows startled and departed from the looming sign that said Goodyear with the flying foot Allan Peterson

Innovation

For those with chipped flint and with obsidian copper stopped them and likewise the rivers like edged weapons small blades under a snake explain its swift sinuosity and how one learned from the other like the glowing fungal acidity of soil under the flood lights that keep night from crushing the airport

Influence

The moment is unchanged by how we dance skip out or fidget in our seats. In one explanation the Samba was derived by a chance mating of willows and skeletons. In another, the sky is spinning with the earth, catfish are kissing the lake bottoms. It is all so intimate the moon itself is painting swatches on the doves while elsewhere a splinter is sufficient to kill us. We patiently await the effects of the more understandable: wet lips, dry eyes, the single death lily that honks below the pines. Allan Peterson

False Starts

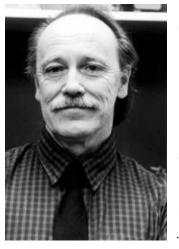
She said false starts. I heard false stars. Like runners that begin and have to come back because of someone too anxious. Even if I started now I'd never get there. It's too far and we can't believe that long. We'd have to come back. And they are false. They've told us for years. They may fall right out of the sky while we watch. They may not even be there now, the light's so old. Silent light. An old unbelievable song the farther back you go.

Specimen

A red wasp hovers uneasily as it homes in, its small shadow cracked and shattered by a thousand leaflets. Nearby, a bird turned out not to be one but three leaves sideways making a thrush shape The wasp is precise and performs the acts of its kind as a perfect specimen. I could mention its name, but that has no bearing. This is about the question for which a word on a pin is the answer

White Chairs Over

The storm last night in its overbearing way talking too loud throwing things around turned the white chairs over as if we'd left for the summer and forgotten the protocol the slipcover forgotten to unplug appliances remind our belongings of our lasting affection for them that we would return to handle them again saying our secrets in their presence showing them our bodies



Allan Peterson lives in Gulf Breeze, Florida He the author of a book, Anonymous Or, and two chapbooks, Stars On A Wire and Small Charities. His poems have appeared in The Gettysburg Review, West Wind, Arts & Letters, Northwest Review, Belleview Literary Review, Agni, Drexel Online Journal, The King's English, Story South, Prairie Schooner, Beloit Poetry Journal, Mid America Review, and elsewhere. He was the 2002

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