

Poems

The Flowers of Kaifeng Again

The flowers of Kaifeng are in bloom
honey sweetness of the black locust
sickens the perfect night
... “all those relationships that can never be...”

And those purple blossoms
stealing attention from the blueness above
reminds of love’s short life
... “how we mindlessly walk upon the fallen petals...”

When the white buds are all on the ground
afraid of how it will look
compelled to keep the outside clean
... “sweeping our friendships off the street...”

Ruefully returning home
determined to keep the scattered blooms
from getting inside
...we leave our shoes beside the door.

Huai (Broken)

Write the word
broken _____
the black in the ink was broken into dust
the hair for the brush was broken from the skin
the bamboo for the handle was broken from the tree
writing the word
broken _____
it is broken from me.

Bari Falese (2006 November 17)

When free from conventional ideas

Aren't you bound in tight that
you have to be in this way?

that you have to get on well with everybody?
that you have to be always cheerful?
that you have to be lively and in high spirits?

But we are human
There are various times

We have a time
when we are depressed
when we don't have power
when we have a quarrel with others
when things don't go well

There are various times
There are various things happening
Something is born from there
And we become aware of something

When we are free from conventional ideas
We begin to think that everything is as good as it is.

Ikue Tezuka

(Translator of Japanese edition of *Grace Unfolding*)

Creek Crossing

this is how I
make my way
gingerly
choosing
the driest stone
on which to place
my right sneakered foot
a wet
but mossless one
on which to place
my left
always testing
before shifting
the whole load
calf
thigh
heart and head
the other leg and foot
hovering
over the creek
sweetly scented of silt
and moss
stirred
by crawfish and suckers
while my eyes search
for the next
safe spot
to place
a toe
to balance
my weight
to make
my way
gingerly
always afraid
of getting wet

Cathyann Simmons

