

Not even a Color

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It was April and I was walking unadorned
Through Prospect Park
Site unspecific
With no destination in mind I, timeless,
Moved like entropy in cosmic auras
Listlessly swooping as a Degas' dancer
In orbit around a willow weeping,
Or perhaps
Shuffling through a gingko carpet,
My soles dragged
Searching with sanguine weight
As though I were the Creusa of Brooklyn.
Moving off the honeycomb
Cobblestone my vision directs my motion
Drawn by chance
Into that dear urbane jungle
Past the curiously colorful
Courageously continental
Coniferous trees
Idealized to Olmsted's dream.

At last I encounter the lake, mixing
Yellow peonies with blue water, forming
Black currents in drunken eddies, watching
Two white swans tell jokes, laughing
In good-humored agreement.
The air is quiet
Worried I could be interrupting,
I take my place at the shoreline pew
Observing as Notre Dame gargoyles might
When they realize that mass has begun.
I, infinite, shush myself unobtrusive
Waiting for the scene to unfold
With silence much like Queequeg's prayer
And penitent I endure.

Graceful, purposeful, merciless, absolute,
Finally, the First Movement arrives – sunlight
Aha
Look there – sunlight beams
Through the leaves, and wings of insects too
Reflect shattered rays
Algae bloom like Rorschach blots

And dusted particles float amorous
Wafting like a luxurious perfume
Chiming dimly between myself and waltzing branches
Do you remember the melody
Of clanging bell towers on 2nd street
Weekend mornings before I was even alive?
Unprepared, I inhale instinctively, exhaustively,
Chest inflating
Until I can hold no longer
I exhale breathlessly
Harmonizing with the park's own song.

Second Movement sneaks up, slowly though –
Listen
Across the mirror-still
Like a breeze tiptoes
Shaking down acorns, hats and all,
And each pitter-patters with tepid staccato
From grey oaks above
Ascending into the wet alluvium banks
As Newton nods each to rest.

Third Movement, faster now –
Keep up – keep up!
This paradise lost bears no cigarettes
Shattered glass, tissue paper, nor coin-tossed dream
No forgotten memories
Of summer aching or August forsaken
This immortal, immutable shadowed vale
Contains all empathies,
Past and present.
It contains monarchs and cardinals alike
Free from all taxonomy kingdoms
A field mouse, a barnacled muscle
And seaweed clustered like Escher's fingers
Morphing, swaying with the coy fish current
Then gone before
I can muse.

At last, the Fourth Movement –
It was April and I was walking unadorned
Through a passion
Filled with atoms and longing too
Incomplete, uncontained.
With no destination in mind, I, tremendous,
Embraced only the wasteland's ethos
And I was content.
Truth, and truth alone would have it be that

This song is yours; that
This place is mine; and that
This poem is ours.
Because the final movement is, unknowingly,
Not sharable, not realizable,
Not even a color.