



## Like Newborns We

The young and the old are alike  
 Hovering as they are  
 On the border of here

In the wrinkled skin they don't quite fit  
 Muscle mass a promissory note  
 Or another debit in the ledger;

In the terrible delight new things bring  
 A moon, a face, a leer, a crash  
 Fingering the digital screen;

And the need to fix them in a shifting landscape  
 Of inconstant arrivals  
 Or sudden departures;

In the hunger for sleep,  
 Exhausted by mid-day  
 And nightly insomniac:

The mind too full to contain the world

## On Men Weeping

Boys don't cry was beaten into me  
 By my father's belt; mother used her shoe  
 The lesson never took; I failed boyhood  
 Wept as I failed manhood too  
 Soaking the pillow after I moved out  
 Of a dead marriage leaving two sons behind  
 (Wept again when they chose to live with me).

"Crybaby" followed me around  
 The schoolyard and ended street games  
 Older brothers, taller friends hit me  
 Just to see tears well until the day  
 I learned to swallow the stone in my throat  
 And stare back waiting for more  
 Until the day I caught my mother's wrist  
 And held it pinned in air gazes locked  
 I cried in secret then and often at the movies  
 Filling the dark with silent sobs.

I learned that men weeping is permitted  
 So long as they make a point of trying  
 Not to be seen. Or making sure  
 They are seen trying not to be seen.

## Vanishing Point Perspective

This old body heals slow  
 But old souls have hard shells  
 Takes a lot to crack this nut  
 Casting stones weaving spells.

Lift that spider off the wall  
 Carry it gently out the door  
 She might be mother after all  
 Coming back, as they do, for more.

Oh the webs we weave, the tales  
 We tell! The wounds, the scars, the lies.  
 Those echoing regrets do fade,  
 Though healing takes its own sweet time.

And time itself is a construct  
 We invent as we self-destruct

poems by

Marty Skoble

# If Life Gives You Rain Make Rainbows

—Robert Frost

“...if design govern in a thing so small”

Despite tension  
There is comfort in erectile tissue  
The play of endorphins,  
Those dolphins in the body of water  
We are. And how they love to leap  
And roll the surface with their acrobatic  
Aerobics, then dive deep into the dark.

It's an ingenious construction  
Above mirroring, echoing below,  
Below blooming above  
In ageless synchronicity.  
The insistent animal thrill  
So much more than skin deep.

# This Be the Verso

with apologies to Philip Larkin

They drive you crazy girl and boy  
They never mean to but they do  
You thought they were there to enjoy  
But oh the woe they share with you

But they are driven all astit  
By hormones and the internet  
Their story posts and friends are where  
Their hearts and minds are likely set

Families do what families must  
They ebb and flow in tidal strife  
It's hard to know just who to trust  
Bound together to live this life.

# Sentenced

for Craig Townsend

The period is an end-stop, period.  
A real stop:

you can get off here

(Or change to the next train).

Unlike the margin, which is a flexible illusion,  
Or that period which promises another month  
Of flexibility and desire, thus an ongoing pause.

But this is not a poem about punctuation;  
It's about time served: life postponed,  
Diaspora and servitude,

A man pacing in the delivery waiting room,  
A woman writhing on a gurney  
A person denied transformation/justice.

It is a poem about the ultimate sentence:  
Life.

See that period?

There is no other, no semicolon/afterlife after life  
I know my beloved/blessed friend says otherwise  
Promising another period  
Altogether.

We'll see about that later

Period

