

Ed Krizek

PRAYER

...where forgetfulness and memory go on with their bargaining
Tomas Tranströmer

Yesterday
(or was it last week?)
I asked my dreaming
about history.
Much is blurred and confused
in the knotted string of time
that runs through everyday thought.

Did that woman
running for the train
remind me of a past love
or is it just a leak in the dam
that holds back the tears?

Smoking shades of intimacies
combine with images
of sunshine or
clouds or rain.

We move through present moments
as if pulling memories
attached at various places
to the rope that begins in birth.
Their weight alternates
between burdensome and buoyant.

What of the person
comprised of these wisps
of perception
who ponders life quietly hopeful
surprised by how transient time is?

It seems he waits forever for an answer
just as the stillness in the night
waits to hear the morning.

2

Sometimes I wish
I were a person of color

when I hear the speech rhymes
of African-Americans
or Salsa music
or firecrackers on Chinese New Year.

These people are wounded
by prejudice and circumstance.
I too am wounded---
feel drawn to sorrow
like a hungry animal
who smells his kill's fear
before its blood.
I lick tears from wounds
astounded by the taste of grief.

3

We still talk about Achilles
who chose to die young
gloriously in combat
and be remembered
rather than living
an obscure, uneventful life
to old age.

Who of us
would make that choice today?

Perspective and priorities change
with age. I remember
when we said
Don't trust anyone over thirty!
Living life now
beyond that youthful time
of ranting bravado---
Do I dare trust myself?

4

The yellow and purple flowers
of spring announce
the earth remembering summer.
Summer, with its oppressive heat
and days of sweating beauty---
Time of vegetative growth
and urban riots.
Why can't we all just get along?
Desire is the root of all suffering.

Greed too flows out from desire
like a noxious stream.

*If you put a group of laboratory animals
together in a cage, the first thing they will do
is form a dominance hierarchy.*

There are those who have
and those who don't.
Still we must co-exist.

5

Help me hold on
to Hope
that sublime and curious gift
who can trick us
or sustain us.

Hope remained in the jar---
a gift of the gods
or evil?
That is for each of us to decide.

Perhaps she is both.

Ed Krizek holds a BA and MS from University of Pennsylvania, and an MBA and MPH from Columbia University. For over thirty years Ed has been studying and writing poetry. He is the author of six books of poetry: *Threshold*, *Longwood Poems*, *What Lies Ahead*, *Swimming With Words*, *The Pure Land*, and *This Will Pass* All are available on Amazon.com. Ed writes for the reader who is not necessarily an initiate into the poetry community. He likes to connect with his readers on a personal level.