

Beautiful and True

Rachel Hadas

Gazebo, temple—that's where I had been
and woke up happy - beautiful and true,
with halfway through the door a friend to greet me.
Waste paper on the steps: I waded through

and woke up joyful. Beautiful? Untrue?
Innocent children playing out of time.
Waste paper on the stairs; I waded through
scorched documents, old lecture notes in rhyme.

Innocent children playing out of time:
Doll Rock. An acorn sprouting in a cup.
Documents shredded, yellowed notes in rhyme:
some historical and some made up.

Doll Rock. An acorn sprouting in a cup.
A torn T-shirt in the dryer spins.
Some is history, some we make up,
uncertain where one ends and one begins.

A torn T-shirt in the dryer spun.
My friend shows off its ragged black and white,
one ending where the other one began,
as each day pours itself into each night.

My friend shows off the patchwork: black and white.
The ocean is neither round nor square.
Daily twilight deepens into night:
a trembling, then a settling in the air.

The ocean is neither round nor square.
The moon seen in a puddle isn't broken.
A trembling and adjustment in the air:
the vision brushes past and I awaken.

Moonbeams on a puddle never break.
Beautiful or true? I only know
there was a subtle change when I awoke,
a breath, a breeze, a passage. Was it you?

True or beautiful—I only know
I entered heartened into the new day.
Passage: an understanding, as if you
had lightly touched me and gone on your way.

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Anywhere But Here

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The fiddle-heads, the tightly curled, the process.

A beautiful illustration of the law of obedience:

one generation curves into the next.

Burst pipes, no water, crouching in the woods.

Baby leaves, hammock, wind chimes, dappled sun.

My broken wrist, now healed,

never again as flexible or strong,

draped nightly over your back.

One generation springs out of the last.

Law of convergence: two wounds bleed to one

and the wood curves and grows and seals

the severed part: wood, wound,

blood, sap, funk, branches, skin,

removing a scar to replace it with a scar.

I would not be anywhere but here.

Fiddleheads taut but ready to unbutton.

Dry burs, green burdock bush, tea-brown brook water.

Warner Creek's oxbow, widened since the winter:

from bald dun soil, slopes strewn last fall with straw,

thin grass is now sprouting,

beautiful illustration of the law.