

## Pattiann Rogers

### BEING SPECIFIC

The beginning subject is narrowed  
first to the yellow toe-claw on the left  
front seven-segmented leg of this one  
specific, totally bright yellow  
spider misplaced, a small spectacle  
moving across the damp, grey  
gravel of the forest path.

Yet the subject, more specifically,  
is the cellular tremble of pulse  
in this particular toe-claw belonging  
to this very spider I see, lost  
from its yellow-orange flowerfield--  
goldenrod, daisy, jessamine.

Still, to be more exact, the sole  
subject here is one colorless shiver  
of molecule inside the one-chambered  
heart of this quite shiny, yellow-  
eyed, golden pea-orb pausing  
on rock at my feet.

But the focus, to designate  
further, must be on one atom-  
to-atom link inside this arachnid  
heart this afternoon, and further,  
within this spider-atom, one electron,  
and beyond that, one subparticle,  
and further beyond that, the last  
and finest specification possible,  
which is naturally the only

underlying, indivisible universal  
that thus possesses like the void  
and exhibits like the boundless  
and holds distance like the night  
and serves like the sun and inhabits  
like the stars and therefore exists  
as this split-moment's revelation  
inside the mind meeting itself  
in the recognition of its own  
most specific composition.

CORRESPONDENCES

Wasn't it true once that I spoke  
with the nocturnal expressions  
of the blind snake emerging on a craggy  
mountain slope at night, its cylindrical  
body a silver motion in the rain  
among the rocks?

Didn't I describe the virtues  
of the moon jellyfish with the same  
rising and descending measures of its flaring  
blue circle of silk beneath the sea?

What I said of the bristlecone pine—  
*split and garbled, a crone cracked dry,  
bent and scarped*—I said not to the tree  
but by the crippled fractures of the tree.  
And because they and they alone  
implied it, I said of field grasses  
in the wind: *the rolling light of their  
fading brown and wine winter hues*

Didn't I repeat the stalking air  
of the forest in the cadence of the lynx  
tracking through snow? And in recounting  
the draw of the barren uplands, how  
could I avoid the sway of the plover's  
low, soft moans of courtship?

The black centerpoint of the cat's  
eye widens with concentration  
until it fills its space fully, just as  
the attentive night widens the moment  
to the edges of its full horizon.

If the *see-you* song of the yellow-toned vireo is the lilt of the leafy brush where it perches, if the green current of the sandy pond bottom is the song of the sunfish holding above its nest, then can the notes of nothing by itself ever be known?

Any prayer of the evening sky—swift, transparent, passing by blue—possesses all the vacant and wordless features of that to which such a prayer may be offered.

OBSERVING THE QUESTIONS OF A GREY SKY

What we observe is not nature itself but nature  
exposed to our method of questioning.  
—Werner Heisenberg

Who would suppose that one sky by itself  
Could contain so many colors called grey—  
Blue grey, beige grey, toad grey, and broken grey,  
Birch grey, severe grey, and barely perceived,  
Sable grey at mid-heart, and never perceived but postulated,  
The lavender grey of flowers found in winter moss  
Beneath juniper trees? To the north a lateral column  
Of soldier grey rises like smoke, forced without wind  
To its own statuesque devices. Low in the south  
An illusion of grey covers the sun.

And the sky above possesses the same multiple greys  
As the sky in the lake below. Which sky is it then  
That moves backward through the flight of five black birds  
Skimming the tundra grey surfaces? And which sky holds  
The five black shadows with wings in its clouds?  
If the birds should soar, in which direction  
Would they fall? If the birds should dive,  
Into which clouds would they disappear?

Does the grey body of the wooden shed beside the lake  
Find an aspect of itself in the slivered grey  
Of the eleventh layer of cloud above? Does the loon  
Learn something new of its breast matched perfectly  
In color with the knife grey edge of the sky  
Against which it poses? Does the meadow vole  
Become forever related to cumulus vapor  
By being its identical brother in grey this afternoon?  
What if the brown grey grasses of the field  
Are simply the limited vision of the sky making seeds?

Where is the grey parting of the sky  
Made by the bow of the boat moving across the lake?  
And in this wide expanse, who can find the grey shoulder  
Of father's coat or the grey separation of your footsteps  
On the path or the grey ring of the rock thrown in anger  
Into the sky? Must the entire history of grey descend  
Forever beyond the bottom of the lake or can it disappear  
Diagonally into the dark line of the circular horizon?  
Remember how the motion of grey can come suddenly like rain  
Breaking the sky into overlapping circles in the lake below.

Any question occasioned by the grey sky this evening  
Must be part of the sky and a metallic grey itself,  
Easily observed in the mirror of grey  
Found in a reflective eye.

THE DREAM OF THE MARSH WREN: RECIPROCAL CREATION

The marsh wren, furtive and tail-tipped,  
by the rapid brown blurs of his movements  
makes sense of the complexities of sticks  
and rushes. He makes slashes and complicated  
lines of his own in mid-air above the marsh  
by his flight and the rattles of his incessant  
calling. He exists exactly as if he were a product  
of the pond and the sky and the blades of light  
among the reeds and grasses, as if he were  
deliberately willed into being by the empty  
spaces he eventually inhabits.

And at night, inside each three-second  
shudder of his sporadic sleep, understand  
how he creates the vision of the sun  
blanched and barred by the diagonal juttings  
of the weeds, and then the sun as heavy  
cattail crossed and tangled and rooted  
deep in the rocking of its own gold water,  
and then the sun as suns in flat explosions  
at the bases of the tule. Inside the blink  
of his eyelids, understand how he composes  
the tule dripping sun slowly in gold rain  
off its black edges, and how he composes  
gold circles widening on the blue surface  
of the sun's pond, and the sharp black  
slicing of his wing rising against the sun,  
and that same black edge skimming the thin  
corridor of gold between sky and pond.

Imagine the marsh wren making himself  
inside his own dream. Imagine the wren,  
created by the marsh, inside the marsh  
of his own creation, unaware of his being

inside this dream of mine where I imagine  
he dreams within the boundaries of his own  
fixed black eye around which this particular  
network of glistening weeds and knotted  
grasses and slow-dripping gold mist  
and seeded winds shifting in waves of sun  
turns and tangles and turns itself completely  
inside out again here composing me  
in the stationary silence of its only existence.