

“Prospect Park, Holy Week”

The mean swan has returned to the pond;
the white ducks are back; the wild ducks are out
in the grass, bobbing between dark tufts of ramp;
the drake's green head is the jewel from a cocktail ring.
The sky is streaked with a pale jet stream,
the stretch mark on a mother's belly, and
the late afternoon sun is a bronze fruit
that glazes the pond with its bronze juice.
The black boys on mountain bikes, who pedal fast
as they can down the hill, have drunk that juice,
and the flushed white men who jog in their college shirts
have drunk that juice, and the cyclist with dreadlocks
and shiny black tights pedals his silent racing bike
like that juice was sweet. And you can smell
sweat in your hair and wet earth on the wind
that stirs dried oak leaves and the sheer chartreuse
of the willow. Through the bare trees,
the old Quaker cemetery gleams in the sun
like a mound of polished fingernails.
The squirrels sit up on their haunches,
and the magnolia's black branches
shock the air with their waxy, white blooms.
The meadow has blossomed into
all the colors of sweatshirts,
and the football is back, soaring high
above all of us, the pit of that fruit.