

Excerpt from *The Prospect*

the river was central

each branch arterial

pulling land along with it

in form of pebbles, sand, agglomerate

to accumulate

thus how beaches are made

and people are made to lie down upon them

river pulling the land along with it

pulling us along with it

as we are grass in the wind

so we are rolls of hay

wrapped in disintegrating plastic

shedding rain and the sun

in rolls or hills

subject to pitchforks

people come over the hills

with hay to feed cows and other livestock

sheep, goats and pigs

chickens

cats, dogs

snakes, foxes

white-footed mice

deer

kestrels and hawks

hawks fight in the air

freewheeling territorial encasings

flights over areas mapped out with fierce eye movements

first takeoff after the wildlife refuge or rehabilitation

after the loving imprinting

after the puppet held in front of human face

after nesting in wire and felt

after the leaf trimmings and grass cuttings

the piles of which

were once us

the air is so fragrant afterward

the scent of mowing lingers for hours and miles

the sound of the mower, so peaceful over the hills

down to the river, the dust of the mower

tractors moving over the face of the land

then bulldozers and cranes, trucks
the dump trucks
dump trucks moving over the hills
in clouds of dump trucks
clouds of dump trucks and emissions
all the emissions, all the equations
all the heaviness of the air, tonight
is the rain moving in
is the humidity 100 percent and increasing
are the winds over 100 miles per hour
are the shutters closed
are the bathtubs filled
is the gin and beer and wine bought
is the refrigerator plugged into the toaster
are the flashlights made of tin and wire
does the water really smell that way
is the water turning into fire
is water rainbowed today
is the water up to our necks today
is the hairdryer in the tub

is the axe in the attic
are the seatbelts on
what is that beeping
are we doing a job, a heckuva one
whose job
what job
working it out
working it over
working us over
working you over
turning the sod over, turning that sod over
and under sod more skeletons
a construction of skeletons so many
as to make a catacomb
beneath the ground, supporting the city
the city we have become
just like that, like that