

Six Poems
of Gary D. Cannon

While I do not consider myself a poet, I occasionally write quasi-poetic morsels that seem worthy of existence. Here is a selection of six, compiled in December 2021. They are not intended as a cycle, and are offered here in reverse chronological order. — GDC

Boxes

Everyone's in boxes—
they're all that we have left.
But at least that's something
to keep us non-bereft.
Through boxes we see each other,
through boxes we now speak.
The sadness is that boxes
only provide a peek.
We want to be a part
of all our friends' grand lives,
To see and hug and love and share
those joys that life provides.
Yet all we see are boxes,
boxes everywhere,
Our lives in small black boxes
to real life can't compare.
And so we keep on going,
with happy hours and meals.
We chat and smile and laugh,
and in our sadness steal
Some mirthful moments now and then,
imperfect though they be—
But then again, 'twas ever thus
for you and you and me.

(April 2020)

Fly

There is a fly on my side view mirror
how long has it been there —
probably since my driveway
hiding in the mirror's hard plastic casing
protected from moderate freeway traffic wind

a quarter mile passes, the fly remains
a half mile more, it retreats
walking confidently back to the casing
after a further mile it emerges
perched on the mirror's edge

what does it see
what does it think
does it wonder where it is
how far from home
how to return home

traffic slows
the fly lifts off, away,
two feet, three feet,
then returns
zips
speedy to the mirror

who knew a fly could outrace
a bumper-to-bumper sedan

another five minutes
the fly is immobile
does it see me
watching the mirror more than the road

then
quick as a thought
the fly goes
gone

how will he find food
will she survive
will he try to go home
will she start a new life

to where does a lost fly...
fly?

(November 2018)

A frozen dead raccoon
Just off the road.
I saw it a couple of days ago too.
It was closer to the road then.
Did someone move it?

It is whole, untarnished,
Yet it has lasted a while.
Perhaps it will thaw next week.
Will someone eat it?

Do such creatures have families?
Did it not return home one night?
Does someone miss it?

What if instead
It were a breathing, huddling human.
Would I see it?

(December 2017)

On a sunny summer morning

A homeless man
not particularly scruffy
but clearly disadvantaged
stretches his sweatshirt sleeve
over his hand,
bends down,
squats low,
extends his hand
gently
to pet a stray cat
who raises her head
appreciatively,
slows her pace,
lies down,
relaxed
and happy
on a sunny summer morning.

(August 2017)

about a mile from my house
there is a street corner
where the homeless like to congregate
they sit and chat and help direct traffic

today as I drove by
I saw only three or four folks
one was a cop
another a young black fellow

they chatted and smiled
unforced, natural smiles
toothy, bright, pleasant smiles
calm, relaxed smiles

as if they were
simply
enjoying a moment
of each other's company

(September 2016?)

Depression isn't sadness

Depression isn't sadness

Depression doesn't remove smiles or laughter
— it renders them hollow.

Depression isn't laziness
— it deprives of the ability to function.

Depression isn't selfishness
— it cares neither about itself nor anyone.

Depression isn't pessimism
— it is a lack of optimism, a lack of care.

Depression doesn't alter ambitions, dreams, goals
— it convinces that they are unachievable, wasteful, irrelevant.

Depression isn't mere hopelessness
— it robs of hope, of the will to thrive, the will to succeed, the will to contribute,
the will to exist, the will to have ever existed.

Depression isn't necessarily suicidal
— it may not care if it lives or dies.

Depression isn't boredom
— it is lack of interest, even lack of apathy.

Depression isn't loneliness
— it is aloneness.

Depression isn't sadness.
Depression is emptiness.

(July 2015)