2009

Giving Up Green

Siobhan K. Phillips

Dickinson College

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholar.dickinson.edu/faculty_publications

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons, and the Poetry Commons

Recommended Citation


This article is brought to you for free and open access by Dickinson Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator. For more information, please contact scholar@dickinson.edu.
Sometimes he determines what his choice requires: if once or twice in coming years it may seem awkward not to call on friends with lawns, to walk in gardens, drive through towns of houses lined in moss and bound with vines, or gaze from passing trains at rain-soft valleys lush with ferns and grass, he still might turn his looking back on bricks and carriage axles. Here, more simply, moving through a city bare of cloud, its blocks secure, its river earnest planes of shade and sun, his practice slows to basic tasks and paces. Hours of looking at a single rationed lime. A morning till a leaf is only veins. An afternoon of making stems appear more lucid than their vase's frosted glass. And yet his daily track grows longer, routes extended: then he worries, climbing stairs, that sheer exhaustion might obscure a lack of patience. Or of nerve. So when the clear that comes at five o'clock on cloudy days engulfs the nearby roofs in gold and rose, a stain of noon beneath the darker flaring indigos of dust, he maps a blue, a red, a yellow square across the wall and stares. It's almost more than he can stand. His curtains fill the room with fading air. Below, a window frames a woman paring apples: knife and hand; the skin unwinding shyly from her guiding wrist, unwrapping flesh and falling loose in severed curves. He stops to rest. She smooths a strand of hair.