

WHO PROMISED YOU TOMORROW?

It's time you paganized yourself
and left all sublimations
to the dry of soul.

It's time
you learned that ears can taste,
and eyes remember, and the tongue
and nostrils see like fingertips
in any dark.

Think back
or look around, and all you know
is what your body taught you:
lake smoke in the Adirondacks,
the razor's flame across
your lathered cheek, language
that changed to silence or to tears
when there was nothing more
to say...

Right here in Cannes
on the Fourth of July, you watch
a cornucopia a-swelter in the sun.

A Saudi wife, enrobed
and cowled like a nun, passes
a Cannaise in her isosceles
and thong.

They stand there
like opposed philosophies of women,
history, desire, God,
and everything you think about
too much...

The stationed candles
on the altar of Notre Dame
de Bon Voyage diminish
like your future.

Anchored
in the bay, the *S. S. Ticonderoga*
claims the future's now.

Housing a zillion dollars'
worth of hardware in her hull,
she's programmed for the war
that no one wants.

She bristles
like a ploughshare honed into a sword-
the ultra-weapon from the ultra-tool.

Basking in the hull of yourself
against the worst, you contemplate
the carefully united states
you call your body.

Concealed
or bared, it houses who you are,
and who you are is why you live,
and why you live is worth
the life it takes to wonder how.

Your body's not concerned.

It answers
what it needs with breath, sleep,
love, sweat, roses,
children, and a minimum of thought.

It says all wars are waged
by puritans, and that the war
nobody wants is history's excuse

for every war that ever happened....

The gray *Ticonderoga* fires

a salute of twenty guns

plus one for independence

and the men who died to earn it.

Each shot reminds you of the killed

Americans still left in France.

Before they left their bodies,

did they think of war or what

their bodies loved and missed

the most: a swim at noon,

the night they kissed a woman

on her mouth, the times they waited

for the wind to rise like music,

or the simple freedom of a walk,

a waltz, a trip?

Under

the sun of Cannes, you hum

your mind to sleep.

You tell

yourself that time is one

day long or one long day

with pauses for the moon and stars,

and that tomorrow's sun is yesterday's

today.

Your body answers

that it knows, it's known

for years, it's always known.