

## The Sycamore at Work

I don't recall when work happened to me.  
A shy spring sycamore,  
Its leaves peeking chartreuse  
Through the dense brush scraggle,  
Work came late.

I recall no childhood chores,  
No pressure to weed in the family garden,  
Only a bed to make and waste baskets to empty.

I recall no work after school,  
No pressure to scramble to the gasoline pump,  
Only a request to be home for dinner on time.

I recall no summer work;  
No pressure to join the highway crew,  
Only the lawn to mow once a week.

I recall my pursuit of amusements;  
Climbing garage roofs,  
Throwing lassoes in backyards,  
Pick up baseball in the school lot,  
Bicycles and trailing smudge pots,  
Country club pool and crazy-eights,  
Golf at Ottawa Park.

I recall no guilt.

Work was school work  
That found a gap in my amusements.  
It never introduced itself;  
It found me,  
But it was outside of me.

I don't recall inviting it in.  
Like the sycamore growing through the brush,  
I never saw the seed take root.

One day, with the right angle, it was there,  
Surprised, I recall noticing it - a curiosity.

I don't recall liking it;  
I think I respected it for its ingenuity;  
It had the sanctity of a past,  
A being, not a bud,  
And it was allowed a place.

With a place,  
All else displaced.

Now, my amusements seek gaps in my work,  
Lacking the power  
Guilt pours on the industrious.

I don't recall when work happened to me;  
It came late with the sycamore,  
Casting dense shade  
On all contenders.

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