

"Words' Worth" Poetry Readings

Poets at the Culture, Arts, and Parks Committee of the Seattle City Council.

the poet by Bob Redmond

for lara moran and the babysitters

after the famous poets read, they and the locals schmooze
but i and my backstage pass leave from the back of the back gate
leave their false loud laughs
leave even their well-meaning banter
their after-work rant and rave
"i loved your stuff!"
"are you a writer?"
"we should really get together"
i leave the hard business of selling and buying and meeting and being on and up
leave that networking and overtime word-ing
leave well-intentioned echoes to bandy about each other
like a traffic jam honking in red and blue

i go home, for the three-year-old whose poet-mother is working late
at her other job, pulling guinness for finnegan and frat boys
deserves a break and i assist and take the quiet child with me

yes, i have landed the labor of love tonight in my arms
i carry carward a half-mile and longer the tired girl
talking to her threads of the day's festival chaos and pinwheel splendor
coo-coo-ing the cor-cor, darling corey, sleepy corey
little girl getting heavy, heavier with every corner and crossing

i trade steps with the other poet-pulled-nightwatch,
mother's friend melody who shares conversation and by turns
the child's sleepy bones
little girl, tired girl
whose nodding head is full not with tv or purple toys
but poetry, her mother tongue, her future tense
full with the cadence of tracie morris, bob holman,
everton sylvester, naomi shihab nye, bye-bye poets
you won't sign my book, shake my hand
you won't even see your own until later
now they are either memory or longing

while i, i go home with the poem itself
i am carrying the precious breathing poem
to watch and ponder
this long-haired child of eyes
of ears, of honest weight
child who sleeps
child
who is only just beginning to sing

This page was last updated: January 8, 2000