

**Somewhere**

Thomas Metcalf

This place lives somewhere  
in concrete and in plastic  
along highways and cul-de-sacs  
under gum-covered desks

People are not alive there  
they live there  
and watch the years recede  
into golden waving wheat

Measuring lives in ones and zeroes  
Measuring lives in volume, not weight

Fresh-cut grass spins a new story  
(The smell seeping into fabric)  
Dead men did, children will, you don't  
think of anchors or forlorn glory  
Because movies are still promises

There are pictures of trees  
and statues of people  
that smile and shine  
and look very pretty  
But they all move slower at a distance

Endless black deserts  
meet the sky in a kiss  
where a town consumes eyes  
and runs faster than desire

There's a man on every corner  
Yelling at empty ears  
Ten-dollar words can't pay his mortgage

When we leave, the words and the noise  
and the drinks and the joy  
and the sex and the shouts  
and the smoke and the doubts  
and the bedrooms  
rise up, dissolve,  
and become new breath  
to breathe the same questions:

Do you see the beauty in dirt?  
Do you see the beauty in ash?  
Can you hear the sound of thick rushing blood?  
Did you melt yourself down?  
Did you sink into the soil?  
Did you say, "I love you mom"?  
Have you seen a padlock mouth?  
Have you made one from two?  
Can't you see the beauty in dirt?

Birds are flying east  
They can't leave  
Rain destroyed the grasses  
The grasses will be missed