

An Insect in Action

I can't resist watching an insect in action.
As the East River flows and shifts
With the changes of the moon
And at the whim of the wind,
Changeably unchangeable,
There you are
Quick as the blink of an eyelid
With a barely detectable twitch,
Flickering, fluttering,
Darting, dodging,
Then
Settling, seeking
Or slow as molasses,
Sliding from its settled estate in a bottle
Onto a spoon,
Cinching and inching,
Squirming and churning,
Decisively indecisive
Achingly stretching and clawing
A way to achieve, arrive,
Or escape from detection.
I see you.
You're safe with me,
Unless you're a mosquito.

From *Susan Ceely Philips*

Backyard Ghosts

Sitting in a circle
of woven iron
with the ghosts of too many memories.
A quilted, verdant comforter
envelopes us
To affirm our constants.
Sunlight still
creates her own shadow.
Grasshoppers still
rub their hind legs in crackling crescendos.
Blackbirds still
demand attention in sporadic complaints.
The musty scent of new mown grass
and the end of summer wilting
hangs in the sultry surroundings
like a shroud.
Will these ghostly memories
make way for the gentle fall chill around the bend
and be left clinging to this seasonal cycle?
Nobody stirs.
Nobody clears their throat
as if to make a surprise announcement.
The silence is all that is said.

From *Susan Ceely Philips*

Indian Rocks Beach

She runs wildly,
beach to surf,
splashing, dripping, toward me
in a frenzy.
“Come! Come in with me!”
“No!” I cry. “It’s too cold!”
She runs back to the waves
jumping, dunking, drifting with the tide.
Back to me,
“PLEASE! Come in!”
I pull myself to my feet,
hesitant, inching toward
water’s edge.
Iciness strikes me like an unexpected slap!
I retreat to the sandy shore,
digging my heels and finger tips
into the velvet sound
of the breaking waves.
I ease myself down to create
traditional, primitive sand structures.
The sand’s softness soothes
my winter worn body,
my spirit.
She returns from her frolic
in the sun-splashed surf
to collapse onto the sand.
She rolls her colt legs
and slender torso until
she appears snow covered...
directing my sand play.
“Bury me!”
“Let me bury you!”
“Dig with this!”
Suddenly...
a chatter of teeth
as if a Canadian winter blast has struck...
“Mom! I need a towel!”
“Help me with my shirt!”
“Cover me!”
Now, she lies quietly
in the sun and wind,
covered head to toe
in a man-made sheath,
quietly humming
“The sun’ll come out tomorrow.”

“Mom, are you done yet?”
“Almost.”

From *Susan Ceely Philips*

Tides

Aqua blue seeps into golden glow.
Moving mist –
shifting with ghostly figures –
repelling and blending.
Breaking into fresh,
breezy,
clear,
sparkling air.

Hippopotomus maw wide open –
rolling, and releasing,
forward, always forward
toward complaining, fleeing fowl –
soaring and lumbering together.

Sparkling,
glittering,
smoldering in retreat.

From *Susan Ceely Philips*