

## Still Sorrow

Rachel Ballard

Rest awhile, my friend,  
as I reveal my world to you.

Enter softly . . .

hidden voices trill and coo and caw  
in unison,  
each completing the other's call;  
cadenced hums rise and fall  
from within the grass and bushes;  
dry leaves rustle  
under shuffling feet,  
and blades of grass whisper  
without sound in the wind—  
but all is yet silent,  
sensitive to the changing mood.

Sit quietly . . .

let the world enter your body:  
varying whirl of insects  
surrounds your mind,  
enmeshes your being with the earth  
then ceases,  
broken  
by muffled turning  
of an airplane engine  
passing unseen above;  
cold concrete presses against your legs;  
wind touches the leaves—  
silent music in motion.

Look about slowly . . .

the sun shines  
through white haze;  
dim grayness fills the air;  
branches bend  
in answer to the wind:  
    coy, angry, gentle;  
the dead broken leaves curl  
gray on dying grass,  
and a little hum rises from the earth.

Leave, my friend,

my world is gray today:  
    a Saturday morning of rain.  
It is still with silent sorrow.

Return

when flecks of sun fall  
and the air is bright,  
then will I show you  
the fairy wings  
    and filbert tree  
and sassafras  
    with leaves of three.

Return with me

when the sun strikes the air  
and the day is clear,  
then shall  
    we drink  
        of the honeysuckle vine  
and gather leaves  
    for our sassafras wine.