

## To A Poet With Gratitude

How absurd  
As if I were never to read  
Your poems again,  
Some “triggering mechanism”  
Would release  
A cancer  
Within me.  
Or pressure would build  
Until an aneurysm ruptured  
Spilling its red death  
Into my brain.

No.

Only my tongue would grow thick  
My fingers clumsy  
My eyes blurry  
My ears muffled.

I could only describe this technicolor world  
In shades of grey.  
I could only describe how a mushroom  
Tastes like sand  
How a daffodil  
Smells like stone  
How the touch of silk  
Feels like grit  
The sound of a violin  
Just the raucous clamor  
Of a jackhammer on concrete.

If I never read your poems again  
My life would be lived on a planet  
Of grey gravel, with gravel dust  
Filling the sky.  
But I would not die.

No.

Yet, I would no longer know of  
Words  
That looked like ivory carvings  
Or sounded like the music  
Of a flute  
Or tasted like raspberries in June.

My clumsy tongue  
Could only  
Pour forth words  
Like a dump truck  
Emptying gravel  
On the beauty of our lives.