

Rhymed Entry

NIGHT OUT

Watching you watch sunset bleeding into the bay,
wondering if you recognize this glimpse of heaven,
I feel hope as your arm slips around me, feel it
dissolve as you tug me toward the car. Hundreds
of birds erupt like a shattered exclamation
against hot sky. Your face, washed with incarnadine,
is as empty as an eyeless stone statue.

Behind the wheel you're handsomely in charge.
Your voice holds no hesitations, your competence
allows no unprotected pauses.

You preside at table like a master of ceremonies,
suggesting the halibut, approving the wine.
Years ago, your proposal thrilled me. Marriage
and a fine house were your logical response to love.

Once, I watched you watching a woman, a covert
calibrating of moving parts, then abrupt dismissal
as she became close-up disappointment.
I was happy to meet your expectations, elated
at your discrimination. Now what of the rest,
my love, don't you know treasure is always below
the surface, outlasting what you see?

The musicians play your request, undamaged by regrets.
You impress the waiter as you impressed me. He will
remember you with the best table next time.
There's a movable feast at home we could share.

The impediment thrives in a glib sauce,
a well-served course. The setting is flawless,
linen, Limoges and silver, no place for pain.
I gaze at the tender night gathered at the window,
knowing the most deeply thoughtful expression
you'll ever wear is when you suspect
a bone in the bite of fish you're chewing.

--Glenna Holloway