

Early Pregnancy Test on the Vernal Equinox

I walk
slowly
moving through March gray
while a stick of plastic
develops the color of tomorrow.

Spring oozes from beneath melting snow.
The trees
sticky
stuck between leaf and naked branch.
The clouds
frayed
with sun-fringed edges,
membranes of dusky light
reach to horizons far away.

This season struggles,
sucking from its vernal cord,
slowly finding strength.

I will focus on my walking,
listen to the rhythm of the day
beneath my running shoe.

I try to step without thought,
I try to float on waking grass,
to avoid entanglement in the viscous web
“what if”
to sleep while awake,
to choose not to choose,
and in that to make a choice.
To focus on the wet grass sing
with rubber soles.

But songs of green are squelched
by an urban neighborhood
without urbanity:
A limp discarded condom
opaque in fertile grass,
the crisp crust of dead semen
repels the dew.

A rotten, rancid tampon
blackens in the splintered light.
A man urinates in a bush
behind a CVS.
His back drenched in heavy gray,
he turns just his head to look at me
look at him.

Moments ago I held a plastic cup
precariously beneath me
feeling clumsy when the warm pale yellow
touched my finger.
This man grabs his penis hard
and sprays a mustard torrent
on the tender green of spring.

I shift my gaze
to tight buds of early spring
and march forward to what's next.