

This Poem

by Travis Du Priest

*for Guy Davenport**

This poem may be the very poem that changes your life.
I know it's changing mine—just waiting for it to come
has nearly brought me to distraction. I need your help.
Not out of pity, but in communal contemplation of
the mysteries of . . . well, let's just say . . . of the mysteries.

Don't you sense even now that you're more involved?
That you're being turned inside out, having something
pulled from your inner core, like straining green tea
through bamboo.

Perhaps just hearing me read, you too feel a bit
uneasy. Though thankful, as though a cold is being
extracted from your chest? The pain of relief.

I'll admit that even as I watch the dark lead of my pencil
in abrasion with the white 8 ½ by 11 paper, I find myself
glaring into a window of wonder at what will come next.
At what we will create, at your words flowing through my
hand. I am speechless.

(Pause)

You thought we were through, didn't you? Well, not exactly:

Sages say that space is the essence of Spirit, that fields
and pastures are where angels gather, not on the heads
of pins. So, we needed that gap—touching but not
touching—didn't we? For our souls to catch up
with our bodies as the animists say.

I sense our initial impulses were indeed accurate:
we wait on a threshold of time and space, and
write our poems together.

* *Kentucky Writer, artist, translator, critic*