

Listen...Life

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If you listen, you might hear a story about the deer at dusk
feeding off of the cornfield, the smell of gun smoke,
short fur almost like velvet.

If you listen, you might hear a story about
a handmade wedding dress, the *clunk clunk*
clunk clunk clunk sound of the old treadle machine,
and the cast-iron rectangle of the foot pedal.

If you listen, you might hear about the purple and gold
sensation of smoking weed, a sort of sweet,
comforting smell drifting
through somebody's parlor, sweet sea breezes,
the explosion of light from a match.

If you listen, you might hear about the work of mixing up
the wood filler, filling what's broken
and smoothing it off, matching paint to colors
so when it's done you can't see it was even mended.
You might hear about the woman
who was expected to fix everything.

If you listen, you might hear a story about taking
the slimy seeds out of tomatoes,
the clinking of glass, steam rising from the pot,
the sound of water bubbling, and the pop of lids sealing.

If you listen, you might hear about making a mirepoix,
the warm comfortable smell,
the red onion which looks like an ornament
on a tree. You might hear about
the powerful feeling of a knife in your hand,
cutting up onions, carrots, and celery—
the smaller you cut them, the more intense the flavors.

If you listen, you might hear about

the clank of different farm machines,
the tractor's engine which sounds
 like the half-rumble of an avalanche,
the chatter of cows, the bawling of fresh-born calves.

If you listen, you might hear about being on the beaches,
along the rivers and the oceans. You might hear
a story about picking up seashells
 and starting a campfire at night.
A story where waves roll in and splash serene,
where you boil clams on the fire.
 Where you cool the shells
 and eat the meat from inside.

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