

My Room

I woke this morning with anger
rolling through my body
like a flash flood,
and I was afraid.

The sun filtered through the curtains
with harsh and clear illumination
like the eyes of an angry relative.

On these blank walls
I have hung pictures
of Tahitian maidens,
whose calm and innocent faces
survey the proceedings below them
with unchanging knowledge
and all that they need at hand.

The dark water pursues me and I am tired,
seized by a strange paralysis as in a dream.
I know that low place waits
that I cannot see out of or above.
This tour is the only escape,
only by not leaving
can I be free.

The big red chair is covered
with books, papers,
clothing, towels and my knapsack:
the accumulation of haste.
The heater whirs like the conversation

of a monotonous but faithful friend.
On the upholstered bench
my cat
washes her black and gold fur
with her confident pink tongue.

—Elizebeth Romero

Hungry

They say there is no magic,
or they say
the Magic's gone away.
But I say

when my stomach aches for bread
I know there is bread
somewhere.
If I cannot buy bread
I can make my own.
If I cannot bake
I have friends
who will feed me bread,
share yeast starter
and some flour
to get me going again.

I say that when my lungs
ache for air,
I know it exists—
I have only to open doors,
or clear the block in my throat,
or just remind myself to stop
and breathe.

And I say when I look up at stars
an empty space within my chest
expands and reaches out for something
I have not found for sale yet.
If I never find a friend to share it,
never find the door to open,
if still waiting never brings it—
I'll just have to make my own.

—Anitra Freeman

VOLUNTEER TUTORS

Be a volunteer tutor and touch a child's life! Help at-risk youth succeed in school by volunteering with Catholic Community Service's Youth Tutoring Program. Tutor elementary, middle and high school youth living in low-income public housing communities. 7 tutoring centers located in northeast, central, southeast and southwest Seattle. Centers are managed by qualified teaching staff and are equipped with lots of learning resources. Tutor 2 hours a week for 6 months. (You do not need to be Catholic to volunteer). Initial orientation/training will be provided.

For more info, call Anna at 328-5659