

Gesture I

INK PAINTINGS RAMI EFAL



WILD APPLES

Toad

What if in his very nature
he is an apostrophe to the God
of beauty, yet in his bloated
poverty seeps a particular divinity
for he is not hostile to the water-shout
from the garden hose, he does not
scatter easily like the calico
or the susurrant bees, but assents
to the cold christening as if in duty —
his native temperament
and glory — even his galled wail
at night speaks of his pilgrimage
between rock and flower; his mind
vibrant as the artist's alert, his quandary
while taking his food in droll
sincerity, communion
with the dung fork and
the slop pail, awkward
in the uncertainty of hours, for he has no
notion of the day's breath,
one so close to the plumbous
earth, bassoon mouth booming
behind the fallible
stars, sullen and beggarly
into the unknown.

LEONORE WILSON



Soft Gesture

He drew me to him gingerly
telling me to walk as if I were a doe
leaving only ink drops of hoof marks;
the air in late November crisp smooth,
a tea-colored loveliness, and he was kneeling
as if in blessing to the small mound
of duff and matter, the leaves of madrone
and oak filtering the dawn shingles of mist;
there he brushed the deep sea
of dirt away like the oldest mystery,
as if not to awake pain, as if apologetic
or assuaging guilt; and since I knew
that he was out looking for wild mushrooms
I had anticipated a palpable find,
but there was a calm befitting
the most sublimated spirit — an ancient
dome prophetic as those of Eastern cathedrals —
and the creature was resting, its eyes
somewhere lost in its girdled skin,
its shell carved amazingly by wind and age,
as the hawk cry was heard
near the grove's threshold, so then he immediately
covered up the beast who had forged
its own grave, temporary tomb,
as he has done for me
so often in those early hours
before leaving for work —
scooting the blankets back
over my head, his wife assailed by
her familiar depression, hibernating
each morning from the effulgence of light.

LEONORE WILSON