

Cheap, Clean, Plentiful

It wasn't so much the two-headed calves or sheep-faced babies
that got to me, the way their skin, if they lived, would split,
curling back like pages of a burning book,
or even that cloud crossing oceans and continents,
invisible except for the clicking on counting machines,
leaving the fruit and herds, the flocks of birds,
the schools of fish poisoned in its wake; the mushrooms
growing bigger than all the Bighead Bessie skulls;
the algae, molds and viruses gone mad,
genes messed up, DNA retwisted,
sperm and eggs on a one way trip to abortion, or worse.

It wasn't just that the whole stink was a front for the war
machine, a buy-product of the Bomb pushed
by nationalistic, power-hungry madmen
for an Orwellian-named "defense" industry
run by crew-cut psych-class case histories
of the military-industrial complex,
giving the endless growth of cancer and capital
their perfect logo, the smiley-faced peaceful atom,
neoplastic agent and agency united
in the myth of eternal returns on investment.

No, what got to me was the seven generations
and more robbed of our right to live out our lives
in a natural world, to look at the lakes and rivers,
forests and mountains, the eyes of our children and parents and lovers,
our own eyes in the mirror without seeing them
fingered by uranium's decadent daughters.