

Stop.

Etta Iris

If you think there is time—
You are wrong. Because the water
Beside me is too polluted to swim
And the tree behind me is dying—
Bark bubbling with disease
And the bird before me is still-warm
Pile of feathers stuck bloody—
Dark, radiant eyes
Still open.

Foot Bridge Over the Passy; One Million Shades

Etta Iris

See—Below this cement;
These stones lifting me—There,
the water is casting shadows over
and over itself; White-grey etched
upon with blue-grey and moving,
moving, the patterns of dark—
Black, perhaps, but really—
Transparent; You can see—
Down.

Listen—Behind the cars rushing—
High on that bridge—Route 1 disappearing
into the mist; they push past,
no pause, overpowering most—But, still;
The birds, the wind, the slowed footsteps
of those people with their eyes
Open.

Understand—underneath the speed,
the hatred, the greed—What is forgotten
is not always lost:

The wood, green with chemicals
still harbors barnacles—Still shows grain;
Still whispers of life. In that field—
Beside the highway—There was
a factory (potatoes) humming
But it went up in smoke and now—
It is a field of clover; Green
and white and growing through
the Rain.

Think—Through the blackness
because—Like shadows on this brackish river
the dark is sometimes what allows us to
See—and then, like the barnacles,
we can fight. And like the clover,
we can grow. And like the water,
we can be a million things
at the same time, we can love—
and even if it breaks our hearts
and we cry from the mist
like the seagull we must remember:
the Earth is standing with us—
Carrying us—
In her every breath
So that we can have this moment
and, perhaps,
the Next.

Can't Bear to Lose

Etta Iris

So? Maybe I'm angry
Maybe I want to yell—
At every person who
Says they'd do any—
Thing and does no—
Thing.

So? Maybe I'm tired
Maybe I hate being stuck—
In the middle of two
Worlds; one sane, one
Insane and I can do no—
Thing.

So? Maybe I'm crying
Maybe it hurts like—
And iron glove around
My neck every time I
See something else
Die.

So? Maybe I'm wrong
Maybe nothing is easy—
But why can't we at
Least try because I can't
Bear to lose this beautiful
World.