

Wistful Joy of a Quiet Neighborhood

I would play my guitar and sing and whistle
this warm, cloudy late-spring morning.

A truck, a truck, what is that truck?
It is not garbage-collection day
and I tripple truckle to more noise
down carpeted stairs
as our landlady motor-rolls
up
the house-shaking garage door,
starts her untuned lawn mower,
attacks growing-green,
chemically-fertilized,
computer-watered grass.

Over my ducking, frightened head,
an unmuffled airplane flies lowly by.

Joy, wistful joy of a quiet neighborhood.

The truck delivers liquid cement,
twenty-thousand el bee s in a turning, turning,
greasy-chain-turned, white-painted, steel container
to the man who, in appropriate seasons,
mows his lawn, blows dust from his sidewalk,
snow from his sidewalk,
trims the edges of his lawn,
chops weeds,
does everything,
everything with machines
driven by noisy, internal-combustion
engines,
even,
he opens his mail
with a motor-driven mail opener.

Beginning this morning,
after obsequious months,
I music anyway, regardless,
nonetheless.
Joy in the face of chaos,

I have learned,
I preach,
believe,
and now practice.
A chord. C chord. E minor chord.
Words "I ate a rainbow ..."

The cement truck finishes,
drives away.
The landlady finishes,
rolls the noisy garage door closed
and leaves.
The airplane flies beyond hearing.

A bird sings.
I sing.
In twenty-three seconds
another neighbor,
who has carefully waited
for this quiet moment,
starts his lawnmower
and begins to mow his lawn.
He will follow
with motorized trimming
unmuffled chopping of weeds.

Sing, sing, sing.
Even more, today,
strike resonantly beautiful guitar strings,
whistle,
sing,
"I'm filled
with infinite colors of existence.
I ate a rainbow ..."

Joy, wistful joy of a quiet neighborhood.