

I am lucky enough to have treetops  
Outside my window. If I stand  
In a certain place, I can imagine great flops  
Of ferns on a yellow forest floor.

They yield,  
When I come close, to a machine clamped  
To a rooftop, the girders and pipes touched  
With brittle rust and fading paint --

still lumped  
In the window, tangled in shadows, clutched  
In the ripe mud of night, it rears and screams  
Like a beast sinking in an ancient swamp --  
Triceratops, Iguanodon -- the names  
Clamor in my mind --

at dawn it looms damp  
And gritty, it has bled a pool on the roof  
And a sparrow is washing slowly.

Please consider, in the morning hours,  
When lovers stumble out into birds,  
And the worn rows of flowers stand most rigid --

In the museum a man toils --  
touching the shadowed walls,  
His heartbeats move like small wet frogs,  
His hands unwrapping the mummy cloth,  
His bundle shrouded with dust, the moss of darkness,  
The core still invisible, a resurrected sloth,  
Hanging quaintly in its woven coat.

The rapt silence of the sarcophagus mocks this place --  
Wave on wave of mummy tape falls in the dance,

Until the lewd black thing, grasping its knees,  
Is carted off,

time's flower, grinning cheese.

-- Charles Wyatt