

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