

For Dr. WCW

Category: Poems

written by Randall Weingarten | October 12, 2012

Randall Weingarten

Williams brought over a bag of plums,
A tree of white blossoms,
A locomotive
And images of
Her threadbare ankles

I've loved his poems
The pages are all
Dog-eared now,
Tear-stained
Or smiling

I know this woman
Sitting at the window
The child on her lap
The tears on her face

And that old woman
With her bag of plums
So sweet, so tasty

I know that attic of despair
The hooks of her gown
Undone,
The whisper of
Silk and cotton
Falling to the floor
Her veined body emerging
From the tangles

How I have labored
With him
On those dark nights
In Paterson
The women crying out
For dear life
And the men
Tweedling in their outer rooms

How I have cherished
Those white chickens
And the words flung in
The wheel tracks
On his way home

About the poet:

Randall Weingarten went to Dartmouth College and Tufts Medical School and did his psychiatry residency at Stanford University. "My life has revolved around clinical practice and medical education. I have been a longtime practitioner of *chanoyu*, the Japanese ceremony for offering and receiving a bowl of tea. The spirit of my life rests within the center of my family—my wife, children and grandchild."

About the poem:

"The poem's inspiration came from two sources: first, a sense of affinity with William Carlos Williams' devotion to both the practice of medicine and to the poetry that arose from his encounters with the people and the places he thrived in; and second, Robert Coles' marvelous collection of essays *Handing One Another Along: Literature and Social Reflection*, based on his Harvard course on that topic. My poem serves as a grateful tribute to two people I never knew but have been inspired by."

Poetry editors:

Judy Schaefer and Johanna Shapiro