

## Gordon in the Garden

The angle of the sun hitting my pen tip  
makes it look like I am writing with shadow instead of ink.  
I have to go on faith that the words are there  
Till I move down a line and can see them.

It's magic hour  
The geese are playing tag, the crows are growling at each other  
And Gordon is the only one in VanDusen Botanical Gardens.

Nature talks to him when he is alone and tonight it is.....

VORACIOUSLY  
AUDACIOUSLY  
BODACIOUSLY

...loquatically outspoken.

He is resting on a bench in a sublime alcove  
When he hears a soft flopping sound behind him.  
"Ah a wee frog." He thinks  
"Hunting the muddy gully." He thinks some more.  
But the flopping sound gets louder.  
"Must be a big one," he raises his eyebrows, "or a catfish coming on land."  
But the flopping gets louder, and faster and more frantic  
And Gordon feels a knot of fear  
rise straight up through his throat into his brainstem  
"It's a dismembered hand scrabbling it's way through the slime to grab my  
ankle!" he spins around in panic to see,  
a blue bird jet up and out of the grassy blind  
and land above him on the branch of a tall evergreen.

Then, a duck hydroplanes onto the pond.  
Gordon spins back round to face front again in disbelief  
"This is supposed to be a meditation sanctuary!"  
He avers to himself flabbergastedly.  
The duck is honking loudly and constantly  
at something Gordon cannot see.  
So he says the first thing that comes to him, to halt the racketing.  
"Quack", he says without thinking.  
The duck comes about on it's web toed steerage  
And fixes Gordon with a navigational stare steadily  
"Quack", the duck counters.  
"Quack, Quack", Gordon ventures...

Gordon in the Garden

QUERILOUSLY  
QUIXTOTICALLY  
QUESTIONINGLY

Quasi-sentintiously!

"Quack" the duck responds rather flatly back  
because as with most phrase book quackersations  
they never go farther than that.

So the meeting ends the same way it began.

"Quack" the duck says perfunctorily  
makes a quarter turn with it's little boat body  
and begins bapping it's lower bill in the water  
dredging the shoreline, talking to itself snuggly through mouthfuls of silt.

"Oh Duck", Gordon muses to himself  
"Why can't we understand each other?"  
The duck spits out it's silt, stops paddling  
And regards Gordon impatiently  
"Q...U...A...C...K..." it spells out.  
The sun lowers noticeably on the horizon  
And the duck resumes bill bapping like nothing ever happened.

Gordon doesn't know what to say or think or do  
He is stuck on pause and begins to blur  
As if the playhead is pulling too hard at the videotape of his heart.  
And like the ink from my pen into the blacker ink of my pen's shade  
The separation between Gordon and the Garden becomes insignificant  
And Gordon fades.

Gordon stretches, Gordon arches,  
Gordon blends into the long rays of the sun  
Casting doubt on me as I write all this down  
Whether even these words are really here.

So I sit pondering the possibility suggested by the commemoration  
Etched into the small brass plaque affixed to the face of this bench.

"Till We Meet Again Gordon"  
and while question marks swim in circles  
like the swans at the far side of the lake  
a well-worn vowel scampers..

HEARTILY  
HURRIEDLY  
HAPHAZARDLY

...happily along to the end of the tale (trail).