

Summer, 2007, Holden Beach

1. Seven Pelican Fly-Over

Recounting a dream in which those who feel
I've wronged them shift toward specifics
for a change, cataloguing my transgressions,

I see seven pelicans perform a fly-over
entrained and elegant

They appear to my weary-of-trying-so-hard
to stay aloft in the realms of goodness self
to glide more than flap.

Yes, it is so. Now a nine-flock, now
a four, again seven, give me specimens
to study flap-to-glide ratio.

They glissando over my head,
while, out to sea, small terns,
a pair of them, flap hard, glide short,
now a broken brace of blackbirds
race way from the just-rising sun

2. After the slide show on Endangered Sea Turtles
at Holden Community Church

I've said little here of politics, wars
the stated "state of the world" which,
in truth, even, perhaps especially, here
on the ample lap of the Atlantic
do so pre-occupy me.

I rail, I pray, I support the candidacy of a
good woman (but is she wise?) for congress.
I do my work as consciously and as well as
I can at any given moment, hoping for
a divot of consciousness to affect the
livid green lawn of unconsciousness.

If I had not so much respect for the order of things
(easy enough to say sitting in an air-conditioned condo
by the sea, not a natural disaster--that I know of--
in the neighborhood), I could imagine our
George W, and our Darth-Vader Dick

(yes, "our" if you believe people get the leadership
we deserve---shudder.)

I could imagine them bandit raccoons
pawing precious clutches of loggerhead eggs
slurping yolks
scattering shells sated and oblivious,

but no! more like they (we) are the thick-bodied
drivers of ATV's crashing and figure-eighting
the eroding dunes--

Not a good way, but who's judging?
to begin the day: heartsick, while
before me and beyond, the waves
continue: roll-crest-spill-foam-ebb,
and again

3. Dawning, Holden Beach

When it comes right down to it, who knows
what anyone is looking for?

That man with a flashlight taking form
in the graying day, foraging sargasso
weed, while the tide returns to land
while an invisible-as-yet sun slips
toward the horizon?

The tides themselves are relentless
seekers of something,
even the trawler
seeming to plow a straight furrow
in the water may be seeking something
other than shrimp, though previous
stories of early ocean seeking prepare
me to tell this story: trawler/ dawn/shrimping.

I have secret and, I fear, class-based
disdain for the treasure seekers with their
shorn shorts and metal detectors patrolling
the sand.

Now a presumed loggerhead monitor
in a red shirt emerging on an
awkward ATV from somewhere darker

west of here, peers into the sand
seeking sign of sea turtles' nests
made in what darkness remains
in nights streaked by porch lights and pier?

I say I seek peace, and yet
I plow and mine and forage with
my own restless backing and forthing
among the eternal questions.

Who, in fact, know what anyone
is really looking for?