

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

The following material has been published and copyrighted by The University of Akron Press. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the publisher, except for reading and browsing via the World Wide Web. Users are not permitted to mount this file on any network servers.

For course pack and other permissions or for more information, contact Thomas Bacher, bacher@uakron.edu.

EVERYWHERE AT ONCE

AKRON SERIES IN POETRY

Akron Series in Poetry

Mary Biddinger, Editor

- Barry Seiler, *The Waters of Forgetting*
Raeburn Miller, *The Comma After Love:*
 Selected Poems of Raeburn Miller
William Greenway, *How the Dead Bury the Dead*
Jon Davis, *Scrimmage of Appetite*
Anita Feng, *Internal Strategies*
Susan Yuzna, *Her Slender Dress*
Raeburn Miller, *The Collected Poems of Raeburn Miller*
Clare Rossini, *Winter Morning with Crow*
Barry Seiler, *Black Leaf*
William Greenway, *Simmer Dim*
Jeanne E. Clark, *Ohio Blue Tips*
Beckian Fritz Goldberg, *Never Be the Horse*
Marlys West, *Notes for a Late-Blooming Martyr*
Dennis Hinrichsen, *Detail from The Garden of Earthly Delights*
Susan Yuzna, *Pale Bird, Spouting Fire*
John Minczeski, *Circle Routes*
Barry Seiler, *Frozen Falls*
Elton Glaser and William Greenway, eds.,
 I Have My Own Song for It: Modern Poems of Ohio
Melody Lacina, *Private Hunger*
George Bilgere, *The Good Kiss*
William Greenway, *Ascending Order*
Roger Mitchell, *Delicate Bait*
Lynn Powell, *The Zones of Paradise*
Dennis Hinrichsen, *Cage of Water*
Sharmila Voorakkara, *Fire Wheel*
Kurt Brown, Meg Kearney, Donna Reis, Estha Weiner, eds.,
 Blues for Bill: A Tribute to William Matthews
Vern Rutsala, *How We Spent Our Time*
Clare Rossini, *Lingo*
Beckian Fritz Goldberg, *The Book of Accident*
Ashley Capps, *Mistaking the Sea for Green Fields*
Roger Mitchell, *Half/Mask*
Alison Pelegrin, *Big Muddy River of Stars*
Jeff Gundy, *Spoken among the Trees*
Brian Brodeur, *Other Latitudes*
William Greenway, *Everywhere at Once*

EVERYWHERE



AT

ONCE

WILLIAM GREENWAY

The University of Akron Press
Akron, Ohio



Copyright © 2008 by William Greenway

All rights reserved ♣ First Edition 2008 ♣ Manufactured in the United States of America. ♣ All inquiries and permission requests should be addressed to the Publisher, The University of Akron Press, Akron, Ohio 44325-1703.

11 10 09 08 07 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Greenway, William, 1947–

Everywhere at once / William Greenway.

p. cm. — (Akron series in poetry)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-931968-56-0 (pbk. : alk. paper)

I. Title.

PS3557.R3969E94 2008

811'.54—dc22

2008024053

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48–1984. ∞

Acknowledgments

88: A Journal of Contemporary American Poetry, “Praying”; *America*, “The Audition”; *Artful Dodge*, “Just Man,” “Shinto”; *Atlanta Review*, “Orpheus and the Ex-Mrs. Lot”; *Basalt*, “O’Sisyphus Tours,” “The Path to Iskeroon,” “The Dead Use Us for Their Pleasure”; *Bryant Literary Review*, “The Interpretation of Dreams”; *Cave Wall*, “Twm Siôn Cati’s Cave”; *Ekphrasis*, “Fishing for Souls”; *Front Range Review*, “~~Mediation~~, ~~Medication~~, Meditation,” “The Husband, Upon the Wife’s Returning Home”; *Hurricane Blues: Poems about Katrina and Rita* (Southeast Missouri State University Press, 2006), “Storm Surge”; *In a Fine Frenzy: Poets Respond to Shakespeare* (University of Iowa Press, 2005), “Ophelia Writes Home”; *The Laurel Review*, “Tenebrae”; *The Ledge Magazine*, “Three Stories”; *Louisiana Literature*, “Holding on to the Pommel,” “The Keys of Women,” “Portrait of the Artist as a Young Boy”; *Mississippi Review*, “Hutch,” “Ophelia Writes Home”; *Planet: The Welsh Internationalist*, “Battle of the Bulge”; *Poetry Daily*, “Orpheus and the Ex-Mrs. Lot”; *Poetry Wales*, “Gross Anatomy” (as “The Autopsy Poems”); *Prairie Schooner*, “Perseverance”; *Rhino*, “Applesauce”; *Shenandoah*, “Spot On”; *Southern Poetry Review*, “Why We Never Had Kids”; *The Southern Review*, “Canterbury Tale,” “Parallel Man,” “The Side to the Wall”; *The Spoon River Poetry Review*, “Persephone” (as “Eurydice”); *Tar Wolf Review*, “St. David’s Day”; *Toledo Review*, “The Unusual Suspects”; *Twice Removed* (Main Street Rag’s Editor’s Choice Chapbook Series, 2006), “Erratum,” “Mary Morgans,” “Otherworld,” “Parallel Man,” “Red Sky at Morning,” “The Wolves of Wales,” “The Others,” “Two Minds,” “Forensics,” “Fishing for Souls,” “Elect,” “Roman Holiday,” “The Path to Iskeroon,” “The Dead Use Us for Their Pleasure,” “Portsmouth,” “Directions,” “Our Lady of No Layovers,” “O’Sisyphus Tours,” “Hounds of Heaven,” “The Place You Belong,” “The Interpretation of Dreams,” “Twice Removed.”

I thank Youngstown State University for the sabbatical that enabled me to write this book.

Cover: *Umbrellas* (1927), Antonio Petruccelli. Used by permission.

Contents

I. Assisted Living

- Everywhere at Once 3
Portrait of the Artist as a Young Boy 4
Bump 5
Ophelia Writes Home 7
Shinto 8
Perseverance 9
The Audition 10
The Olympus Food Court 11
Feeding Time at The Fuel and Fuddle 12
Assisted Living 13
Battle of the Bulge 14
Orpheus and the Ex-Mrs. Lot: A Second Marriage 15
The Side to the Wall 17
Just Man 18
The Keys of Women 20
Play, for the Night Is Coming 21
Gross Anatomy 23
The Crash 25
The Loaves and Fishes 26
The Husband, Upon the Wife's Returning Home 27
Mediation, Medication, Meditation 29
The Unusual Suspects 30
Bogeyman 31
Late 33

II. Twice Removed

Erratum	37
Mary Morgans	38
Otherworld	40
Parallel Man	41
Red Sky at Morning	42
The Wolves of Wales	43
The Others	44
Two Minds	45
Forensics	46
<i>Fishing for Souls</i>	47
Elect	49
Roman Holiday	51
The Path to Iskeron	53
The Dead Use Us for Their Pleasure	54
Portsmouth	55
Directions	57
Our Lady of No Layovers	58
O'Sisyphus Tours	60
Holding on to the Pommel	61
The Place You Belong	62
Hounds of Heaven	63
The Interpretation of Dreams	65
Twice Removed	66

III. Storm Surge

Persephone 71

The Night Before We Left 72

Cells 73

The Hard of Hearing 74

Long Love Sonnet 75

The Angel in the Elevator 76

Smackdown 78

Praying 80

Hutch 81

St. David's Day 82

Spot On 83

Three Stories 84

Why We Never Had Kids 85

Once, Driving in England, in Winter, in Rain 86

Twm Siôn Cati's Cave 87

Tenebrae 88

Applesauce 89

Honey 90

Canterbury Tale 91

Storm Surge 92

For Betty, for her bravery



I

ASSISTED LIVING

Everywhere at Once

*Even in Kyoto,
Hearing the cuckoo's cry,
I long for Kyoto.
—Basho*

Why does my brain always suddenly flash to the places I've been in France or Italy, and mostly Wales, when I'm only boiling an egg or putting on my shoes, which are neither French nor Italian and especially not Welsh? I've even dream-traveled to places I've never been, like palmy Papeete or balmy Bali, or India, where I swear I used to live, a boy whipping the flanks of a water buffalo on the banks of a red dust river like the Chattahoochee, where I was reared this time around. I should be a Hindu instead of a Southern Baptist preacher's kid gone south, the way I space-time trip to the triple play of Atlanta, New Orleans, Portland. Once by the Irish Sea, I couldn't even see it, so blinded was I by the lean of my yearn for Sanibel Island, Florida. But this is the whirling compass, the bong and ping of the psychic pinball of karma, and with the world cocked at twenty-three degrees, what else can we do but tilt?

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Boy

I drove my big sister nuts
as she tried to sleep in our shared bedroom
while I crooned to the dark “America
the Beautiful” or “The Marines’ Hymn.”
“Get him out!” she’d cry to my mother.
“He’s so weird!”

So Mother tried reading to me,
stories, poems, and I’d sleep,
until the night she read Field’s
“Little Boy Blue,” how the toy
soldier waited staunchly in
the attic for the little boy who died
to come back and play with him.
I cried so long and hard, she finally
had to put me in a cold bath
and give me hiccups.

After that, I made up my own songs,
my sister weeping every night as I sang
of a little toy soldier who ran
in the amber heaven of waves
of grain, or waited forever
in the hell of the empty halls
of Monty Zooma, or on the desolate
shores of Triple Lee.

Bump

*It appears that some of my cells have opted
for quixotic careers of their own.*

—William Gibson

The readiness is all.

—Hamlet

It's been a week now since he sliced it
from my nose, and I await the verdict.

Death is a fearful thing, says my
Shakespeare calendar for today,
though maybe not as bad as a future
scurrying from the shadows of alleys
with a tin cup, or life beneath a tent
as The Hideous Noseless Man, who looks
a lot like the skeletal, acid-melted, phantom
face of Lon Chaney.

Auden, when someone died
of throat cancer, said, *It's because
he was a liar*. I wonder if my *o'ergrowth
of complexion* is from sticking it in
where it doesn't belong, or if brown-
nosing is my *vicious mole of nature*.
Or perhaps this time I'll just get a warning.
In Britain, they call a speed bump, that
hump of asphalt like a mound
of new grave, a sleeping policeman, blue
body prone in the road, arms

straight at his sides, eyes closed,
as if to ask, *And where do you
think you're going in such
a hurry, Squire?* Reminding me
how fast I was headed for the hairpin
turn of my unreadiness.

Ophelia Writes Home

He passed so peacefully in sleep, it seemed
as in a kingly way, or in at least
what passes for a royal death in this
rough place where every bush may hide a bear.
He was a good provider, and we lived
if not as kings, then as two princes who
were born to make the best of baser things
and not forget how blessed we were to be
alive at all. It was Horatio,
you now can know, who hatched the plan to bate
the sword with sleeping potion, culled from stuff
he'd read at school in Wittenberg about
the young Italian lovers, feuding tribes,
a tomb for two. It just remained to bribe
the graveyard clowns to feign and shuttle both
the boxes (I no longer shivering
and wet) on board the pirate ship we dubbed
The Nunnery, a little jest which fed
the joy we felt in one another's arms
across the icy sea, until we reached
this Eden Danish men discovered past
the coldest land of all. Our children grew,
the crops rose tall, the swarthy neighbors brought
their harvest in to honor us at fall.
This is in secret—should you draw your breath
to tell his tale do not this letter show,
thereby his famous tragedy amending.
Recall his melancholy cast and know
how much he would abhor a happy ending.

Shinto

I sort of like the idea of our ancestors
looking after us from some kind of heaven,
though I hope they're not watching all the time,
or if they are, they see only pixilated parts
like the faces of alleged criminals
and full-frontals of horny youngsters
on reality shows. I've always had guardian
angels, of course, but generic, before anybody
I love had died. And we all need backup,
officer down, the blue lights of halos
wailing toward my next accident or assault
or even intervening before I step out
absent-mindedly into a busy street.
They'd flash their badges of silver wings,
the traffic squalling to a hot rubber halt,
while my disappointed mother, now
wearing gloves as white as doves,
waves me across.

Perseverance

My mother used to wear out belts
on my bony body, once broke
a Ouija board over my head,
and Daddy would sermonize till the cows
covered their ears, doctrine
off a duck's back. Schools only gave me
degrees to get me out, and girls got
so tired of saying *no* that they married me.
Maybe perversity grows from a gene,
like grass through a sidewalk,
or hardens and mottles like a shell around
some soft psychic tissue till you have
an organ that plods on while the hares
are sleeping. And so as soon as Mother
would forbid me to go to the creek,
the dogs and I headed there like newts.
And when I finally went too far
that summer at the beach,
and the lifeguard had to bring me back in
to another whipping, I just kept grinning
at how far I'd gotten,
how many waves I'd broken
with my hard head.

The Audition

In this game, we confess the things
about ourselves we've never told
before: Gary wearing the same shirt
for all four of his high school class pictures,
Jim doing something slightly shady
for the CIA in Nam, Kelly dancing topless
that summer to get through grad school.
I hesitate between the public swimming pool
when I was ten, or sitting on my brother's face
and breaking his nose, till I remember
Terry Mayo, not only the prettiest girl
in first grade, but maybe ever, so lovely
she was born for Frank Harris, who wore
a coat and tie to school and, even I could see,
was handsome as a movie star. A little
sheepishly, I decide to scrawl on my scrap
of paper how, for her birthday, I gave her
a brown-plastic-framed picture
of Jesus, knowing my friends will laugh
for years to come. But what they won't know
is how she suddenly kissed me bang
on the mouth in the middle of the playground
in front of God and everybody, or that, when
Christmas came, it was not me, but Frank, gold
in the robe his mother made, who knelt
in the straw with the sheep, while I stood
next to her, cotton wool on my chin,
towel on my head, and felt
with my hand, for a full ten minutes,
her waist, tiny and warm.