



The Difference Between Subject and Object

Certain objects dislike me.
My digital camera cringes
and tucks its tiny controls
whenever I fondle it.
My car develops a cough
if I attempt to drive it more
than a couple of miles to the store.
A pot clatters and smashes
a drinking glass in the dishpan.
The clock looks at me in horror.
The washer gnashes my clothes to rags.

Maybe it's not only me but all
flesh that incites rebellion
in objects tired of being objects.
Does the inanimate always war
against organic evolution,
sparking that infinite high note
that sometimes tingles my hearing?
I suspect an unscientific
overlap between this world
and a parallel one occurs
when the moon strikes a certain pose
to remind everyone that
it's sometimes wise to go naked.

Breaking down the difference
between subject and object requires
grammatical and material
bravado; but mechanical
and digital devices, cast iron
and plastic already express
more courage and persistence than me.
I wish I could recover some
of the human ingenuity
that endowed things with such spirit.

The simpler inorganics, rocks
and standing or flowing water,
don't even notice, let alone
trouble me the way manufactured
objects in their wisdom do.
Picking broken glass from the dishpan,
I cut myself. As the blood spreads
in the sudsy water the pot smiles
a dark old smile, and the clock ticks
with a chuckle that makes me laugh.

—William Doreski

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