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Interpreters House

Poetry Makes Nothing Happen

Let it make nothing happen more, this year,
so that a young girl
whose mail arrives early can read the book she's waited for
over breakfast and find a poem with blue depths and points
of light which she tastes in the back of her throat on the way
to work and walks a little slower than usual so that nothing
happens as she crosses the road because the guy in the 4WD
who was answering a call on his mobile already passed by.

Or so that a fighter sits up almost all night reading Rumi, trying
to understand death and blood, peace and love and sleeps
too late to be ready for the knock at the door so tells them
he'll follow after because he wants to hold his son and play
with his daughter and nothing happens as he kisses his children
because he isn't in the car when a government missile hits it.

Or so that a man, sleepless and pacing, picks up a book
from his wife's bedside and reads a poem casually
but finds lines stuck in his mind like burrs on a wool sock
like when he used to spend weekends relaxed and outdoors
so that he holds back on giving an order and extends
credit on a couple of loans so that nothing happens
to a lot of people that day who carry on going to work
and never even know that nothing happened.