

## The Desiccation of Botany

After I wrote the two botanic flowers of colorful  
Prose, I sat next to the botanist at the poet dinner  
Hosted by my son. He had worked on sexual  
Pollination above the tree line in Montana  
And carnivorous plants before the rain forest  
DNA and chemistry took over the field.  
He also said that poetry in time must yield,  
Being overgrown with weeds.

I said

That in the Islands infestations of greenery  
And sunny spots to echo Coleridge, or Botany,  
Is messy so super people, super clean, need  
To grow randomly a new politics, to seed  
The necessary change. Perhaps a stance  
Rooted firmly in the past is our only chance  
To serve the proper tea. Perhaps a view,  
Instead of some utopic fiction, so new  
That we will not recognize ourselves.  
In any case, our politics involves  
Some determinate selections soon  
Lest we be launched halfway to the moon  
In weightless orbit.

So all our fields are  
Either overgrown with weed infestation or  
Decline. My cousin Bob stood like Dad  
As he watched us drive away. We should do  
More but all stand alone at the end though roots  
Run deep. It was Vergil, also, on my mind  
This trip—the part where three times  
Aeneas tries to touch the shadow of his father.  
My students always laughed at how much Vergil  
Had Aeneas weep. We moderns do not believe  
In shadows anymore, certainly not on sun-draped  
Islands. But shadows drive this modern jet  
Voyage of ours. So if sentimental means  
Reaching out beyond the possible, we touched  
Shadows this trip. My Uncle with his eyes  
Lit up spoke of his father. I spoke of mine.  
Finally, perhaps, the Islands are not so isolate.  
My Uncle said it rained. It always rained  
When someone leaves, he explained.

— Donald M. Hassler