

1050 Sunningdale  
Lake Oswego, Oregon 97034  
12 May 81

Dear Ted,

Watching the bobber early this morning out here, I lobbed a thought your way, and just wanted to follow it up with a note: the spell of your morning stays with me; it has many elements I know from sympathy and experience, from Kansas, from still-fishing, from uncles....

I heard an owl, my morning. Steady, again and<sup>an</sup> again, down in the woods. And a spark where a power line touched a wet tree was flickering scarily.

A week or so back I was at a "humanities" conference up the Columbia, at Pasco (luminaries were there, like at Brookings--Ginsberg, Ike Pappas, others). For an assignment at one of my "workshop" sessions we all wrote on something we remembered from our house, our neighborhood, our town; and I stayed into a strangely fervent ending for my page. I'll enclose the result, for its leaning toward the family feeling in your Cork Bobber experience.

End of this week I jaunt to Maryland, then to NYCity (in in the morning, out before dark). I expect to see a whole roomful of writers, may take my camera--it's an awards ceremony (and I get one--money too) of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Maybe I'll hook into a big one, from that experience.

Adios--

Bill

108 East Nineteenth Street

Mother, the sweet peas have gushed out of  
the ground where you fell, where you lay that day  
when the doctor came, while your wash kept flapping  
on the line across the backyard. I stood  
and looked out a long time toward The Fair Grounds.  
The Victrola in the living room used to play  
"Nola," and the room spun toward a center  
that our neighborhood clustered around. Nasturtiums  
you put in our salad would brighten our tummies,  
you said, and we careened off like trains  
to play tag in alfalfa fields till the moon  
came out and you called us home with "Popcorn  
for all who come." But that was long  
before you said, "Jesus is calling me home."

And Father, when your summons came and you quietly  
left, no one could hold you  
back. You didn't need to talk  
because your acts for years had already prayed.  
For you both, may God guide my hand in its pious  
act, from far off, across this page.