

More from the Chronicles of His Demise

by Gary Hardaway

Disturbance

The laughter of young children, not
your own, offends. It is loud
and shrill and completely inappropriate.

The piercing scream of a neighbor's
3 year olds shatters the otherwise quiet
of my Saturday afternoon. The shriek

disturbs the air with too much joy
and splits the calm of boring patterns
of a singular life with giddy abandon.

Piss on the laughter, piss on the shriek,
piss on the parents allowing this
invasion of my quietude. I seek

no laughter on a quiet afternoon. I seek
my own serene and solemn thoughts.
Community should not include

the raucousness of a child finding voice
and filling late September air with it
and all the joy the voice may celebrate.

Another Consequence of Age

When the taste buds go off,
pot roast and greasy hamburgers

you once savored
taste of old beef fat

and your once favorite kiwi fruit
are tart but otherwise indeterminate.

Only scotch and cheap champagne
retain their reliable flavors.

What I Should Be Doing

I should be scrubbing the sink and toilet bowl.
I should be Cleaning countertops and the microwave.
I should be balancing the checkbook

and finding a good primary care physician.
I should be capturing dust bunnies
and vacuuming the carpet.

I should be arranging the the books
and compact discs in alphabetical order.
I should be culling and arranging manuscripts

and typing out their tables of content.
Instead, I stare at coffee stains and stains of red wine
and name my myriad deficiencies

as if confession were actually good for the soul.
Lists and introspection paralyze in ways
no chemical agent ever could.

