

another ode

by M. F. Sullivan

the strength in you i envy
leaves me naked, sweating in the dust
while you possess what ethic i pretend to have
in the face of those who expect from me
so much more.

illness feels like no excuse
watching you when the day is three hours old
clamber out of bed
to go eight hours, twelve,
and labor in the arizona heat.

my shame is great
as i lie here with muscle aches
and flesh glinted with fever and misery
because i cannot do as you
and give you all i wish i could.

forgive me, lover,
for the things i cannot manage,
and for being so much weaker than your holy arms
which work without respite
and put the ill to shame with admiration.

perhaps i could were i bolder,
but the delirious mind is weak
and knows better all the things it can't do
than the ones it can
even for the greater good.

oh, to give you reason
to feel the pride i do whenever i rake my eyes

across your beating heart!
i have only pens
that write even in the face of frustration

so i'll set them to work
like diana's dogs upon her prey
to bring forth tales and melodies
to make me worthy
of my workman's frame.

