

## Wooing an Autistic Straight Woman

I.

I met her on top of a scraggly bluff called Spirit Rock.

I fell for her when she finished my sentence verbatim

five minutes into our conversation. I said,

*I believe that consciousness – and she finished,*

*- is an inherent property of matter?*

And I was flattened

as something swooped so low in my chest

that it reached my knees,

and my ears were wildflowers

full of pollinators, bees & butterflies.

When I asked how she had known what I was going to say,

she told me that being autistic, she'd learned

to keep track of conversational patterns to know

how to respond in different contexts.

Turns out, she's a staunch materialist.

But if she told me she could break lightning,

I'd believe her.

II.

She doesn't like to be touched unless

she knows it's going to happen.

If she'd let me, I'd run my fingers through her hair.

Sit right up against her. Put my head on her shoulder.

There's no undulation to our conversation.

It builds and builds, kind of like walking uphill

but more fun, maybe like skipping uphill

like we just can't stop

skipping uphill together

then

we plateau

hang out for a bit

in some chatty meadow, when,

drained, our sentences running on empty & left unfinished,

she mentions her husband and her crush

and when I leave, I smash

as though I've changed to ceramic,

suddenly realized it's easier

to be inanimate

though I suppose if all matter is conscious

maybe inanimate objects

have it harder than I'd guess.

In the meantime,  
my tears manifest  
as shards of pottery.

III.

Coming back,  
I'm still dazzled, breathing her in, totally stoned listening to her talk about how  
she can judge people based on scent.

(She smells so good.)

Maybe my intoxication can give me an idea  
of how to proceed:  
not with my intellect but sensually,  
with my instincts & imagination like when I showered her  
with fresh green-pink rose petals  
the first night we met,  
right before I left.

It was sweet as clover honey or fresh honeydew melon  
when she told me she  
had saved some of those petals  
to dry and keep.