

Moreau River Basin

Out across this wide expanse of moving
grasses I can pick out depth and distance
the cut bank in the foreground, speckled loosely
above its sandy flesh with tufts of goldenweed
and drystalk, the fading haze of treed folds
that meet a stark horizon, the brief flash
of a pickup cab crawling slowly into the valley between
dotted round-bales and prairie-dog holes.

Distance and proximity are products of
perspective—not singular, but binocular—one eye
beside another, my brain joining the two flat images
into one fully realized space.

And likewise, depth of thought calls for standing
beside one's self, refusing the thin snapshot
of bias to, instead, flesh-out what would otherwise
be only the skin of reality. This capacity
to see myself in the picture as a relational part
of the action is the corrective lens for all my
centricism, reminds us all that we are not
God, but that God can draw us out,
telescoping mere certainty into multifaceted
clarity, the kind of vision that places me briefly
beside the sleeping dog in the truck bed, and then sprawls me
carelessly in the grass above the bank
before I soar with these cloud-shadows over folded fields and
treetips toward that blue horizon.

When the world lifts up from the Polaroid
of the individual, animated by eyes and ears not our
own, but that we have owned none-
theless,

we become partakers in the world
and the river digs deeper beneath the fields like the
prairie dog or the soul on this ridge
seeing with two eyes—both the one
he was born with and the one he's been given.