

V.B. Price

FORTUNE'S CHILD

-August 30, 1996

Now that you're gone,  
I watch myself starting to go,  
frantic not to seem old,  
embarrassed by my embarrassment.  
But sprinting across the street on my morning hike today,  
avoiding commuters and highschool drivers,  
I knew who I was at last:  
"fortune's child" as you said,  
your child,  
recklessly happy,  
remembering you  
still impressed  
by pleasure  
the week before you died.  
Even then  
you hadn't lost  
your fool-  
hardiness  
for fun,  
sneaking off,  
chauffeured  
for a cappuccino  
miles from your bed,  
for a wheel chair roll  
through a farmer's market,  
sniffing tomatoes,  
thumping melons,  
hungry for turnips,  
hot garlic and butter.  
The audacity of pleasure-  
seeking  
so close to the end,  
barely able to breathe,  
still game,  
still anything goes.  
That's who you are to me

now that you're dead.

No matter how  
miserable I feel,  
how crippled,  
how depressed,  
you felt,

I know your will  
to praise  
by being pleased  
overrode prognosis  
time and again  
for the most  
banal and exalted ends:  
orchid blossoms, oatmeal,  
an easy shit.  
That must be why this morning  
I remembered you  
still young in me,  
still moving free  
through the garden of dawn,  
springing across the asphalt,  
as I followed you  
this once,  
this time,  
to this  
sweet place  
of being  
with you now  
as if there never was  
any difference between us.