

Living Outside
by Joyce Pace Byrd

Living outside ourselves comes early.
We train ourselves to pull up -
out of a body – reaching, stretching
bigger than we really are;
being little risks the trampling.

We learn to hold ourselves
a few inches above grounding -
holding up and holding back
become primary patterning,
holographic imprint.

Resting in a body is learned response.
Welcoming arms must wait
while a being lights and settles in,
like a landing bird needs time
to fold wings and smooth fluffed
feathers.

If no trustworthy lap presents itself
essential rhythm syncopates -
with an interval between self and
integrity.
Truth slips behind convention,
ill-formed and un-beheld.

Without the feel of a true fit
resemblance passes for identity.
Stones are mistaken for bread
and homes forsaken for the veneer of
belonging;
the silver cord growing ever thinner.

Yet through the half light
salvation glows, softly calling,
“Come, come to the House of Grief.
Come inside, come down, down
to rest, at last, in yourself.”

And if you will go into the chrysalis
the goddess there
will hold you in her arms
until you grow the wings
you are meant to *have*.