

BENJAMIN S. GROSSBERG

A Thought

Like a feather descending
in its back-and-forth motion,
slow twirl down to one
end of a balance, and that end
begins to sink—
but so slowly that days pass,
an unscrolling of weather,
the view out the same window
over a series of months:
trees burst in lime-green flowers
so tiny that three or four buds
could rest on the tip of your thumb,
and then come rainy days,
darker leaves, and brightness
expanding like the yawning
of one just woken—
everything unfolding, changing.
And now you find it is
autumn, and somewhere
inside is a difference. A quiet,
monumental thing, difference.
Some dream had long
seemed foundation wall
to a structure you'd hoped to build—
a Jeffersonian grandness.
You'd imagined marble, imagined
columns. But now it is you
who seem to find the structure
more trouble than it's worth, you
who might just, you decide, be
okay without so much grandiosity.
You even surprise yourself
with that word, *grandiosity*,
with its undertone of mocking.
What was it? A word, a look
from a man that wasn't—
you realized a moment too late—
directed at you. A small, casual
failure that added its name
like another entry on a long
petition. No one, not even you

→

BENJAMIN S. GROSSBERG

heard the creaking sweep,
the rusted iron gate
of your will. Though afterward,
at the window, you may
have wondered what bird
dropped that feather—
though so long ago now
there's no telling what kind,
or on its way to what country.