A Poem is Meant

A poem is meant to linger
in the mind, haunt
days after, cause
you to cock your head like
a wary sparrow,
hearkening to an echo
from yesterday.
Even if it is good
for a laugh, it is meant
to tickle an old ache—
not just that, but shine
a light, narrow, yet bright,
a light that bends around
corners of your mind,
bounces off forgotten
experience and creates its
own experience. It is
earthy and transcendent.
Listen now! Do you hear
the rushing in your ears
when the room is still?
A poem is happening—it is
crawling up your back,
over the knot in your spine, feeling it,
but moving, tracing an old
scar, playing neck muscles like
harp strings. Heart-pumped,
it is bubbling through your
veins, coursing toward toes
and fingers, blossoming
out of your palm: a poem is action.
Do you see the grass reaching
toward the sun, ninety-three million
miles from earth? Do you smell
the greenness? Taste the warmth?
Do you feel the breathing earth
shudder like a sleepy mammoth?
Poems are moving everywhere,
toward us and away, beckoning:
listen, feel, smell.
The earth is erupting
in poems, strong and gentle,
sweet and bitter, violent, life-
giving, sorrowful, healing,
peacemaking poems. A poem
is meant. A poem is movement.
A poem is you.