

## What's Buried Changes the Ground

Picture this body dumped where a pond  
used to be, one of those new spit-between-  
the neighbor developments, picture windows  
looking in other windows. Picture a cement truck  
pouring concrete over the body because the driver  
didn't know. And the people of the house living  
with the corpse under their breathing at night,  
a corpse lying in its history  
of polywogs and ponds.

Cast in concrete, the body can't hear rain fall  
on the roof and woodpeckers setting up a racket.  
He can't hear frogs or children who don't come  
for tadpoles, because of the fence.  
He doesn't complain, *The noise. The noise.*  
*Can't a guy get a good night's sleep?*

Or say it's she who's restless for petals  
to fall like silk across her cheek or the three  
o'clock sun warm on her breast, the sting  
of blackberry vines and the sweet,  
sweet juice staining her tongue. She can't say,  
*That's good. That's enough.*

People above ground don't remember the muck.  
They forget living that goes on in the dark: moles  
and roots sucking water. They forget the land could,  
at any moment, heave. But that body,  
that body wanting to feel the lay  
of leaves, tickle of hairroots, mites grumbling;  
wanting to feel moon pulling  
the water, water being an ultimate blessing,  
that body's restless.

by Susan Landgraf, published by *Nimrod*; it's the title poem of my full-length poetry  
manuscript *What We Bury Changes the Ground* published by Tebot Bach