

Where you Find Yourself

If we see flowers planted in a line
or shrubs, constrained and trimmed
with perpendicular sides,
you know right away that you are in a place
of human habitation.

If we see a river
constrained by concrete banks
to make sure it does not intrude
on the spaces selected for humans
to inhabit, you are surely in a city,
or at least a large town.

No river begins its existence
with perpendicular banks
of hand-poured stone.
Nor did the trees, the grasses,
the frogs and turtles,
egrets, dragonflies, sandbanks
or tumble-down rocks that once
lived along these shores ever
think to object if the waters
changed shape from time to time,
visited their lives more intimately. Indeed
this was something they needed
to remain alive and in proper harmony.

Which is why, when I seek
to remain alive and in harmony
I go where the river offers me
its unfettered intimacy,
play the game I call "imagine"—
that there is no place on earth
where flowers are grown
in straight lines, our lives
channeled by hand-poured stone.

Steve Bloom
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