

We both painted the same things,
Streets and grass, sky and sea,
Your trees more closely
Spaced than mine, your lights,
Tighter, and more defined.
You gave your colors white,
A bright finish that jumps and
Turns over in time, and I struggled
With yellow, noting its challenge
As a highlight, when never aligned
By perspective, and you asked me
What I meant by complication,
Why to drink perfection we must first
Eat at the trough of compromise, a line
I found years ago, and thought it more
Sublime in the unavoidable chalice that
Would eventually consume me.

Maybe you'll see this word first
determination
Or skim it by, believing it not gallows-
Worthy enough for a first reading, yet
All of what it taught me, complication/perfection/
compromise has found its way through tiny holes,
Sometimes harshly, sometimes with softness,
But always determined, and ever defined.

Ghosts, your spirits, have been returning to you,
Drifting by your waking memory like Lily's last
Words "we've always been here", and one wonders
How influential Lucy was on J.K.'s imagination
Just to notice that a free mind takes and listens,
Not to regularity, but through the confidence of
Inevitability, it hears the thump of change.

And what does one have to care that much about?
Short of compelling circumstance that drives choice
Away like the three couples who died in a car crash:
St. Peter addressed the first husband "You were pretty
Good, but for your worship of money. You even married
A woman named Penny, so I'm not letting you in, and to
The second. . .but for your love of booze, noting his wife
Brandi. Upon hearing this, the third man said, "come on
Fanny, we don't have to listen to this," as if all were
Consigned to individuation, that is, we care because
We know how to care, and about what floats on the same
Surface as imagination/inevitability/inspiration.