

TELL ME

Tell me how you got here,
the twists and turns of it.
Tell me your secrets
and I will tell you mine
and we'll laugh when they are the same.

Tell me the moments that brought you life,
what brings them back to you
on the wings of fragrance or song
to wrap themselves, warm and familiar
around your fraying mind.

Tell me the places you return to
when no one is watching
to live again, or live differently.
Tell me what lies hidden there
behind the greying windows.

Tell me the roads not taken
so we can mourn them together;
write epitaphs, build roadside shrines,
then pass those places in peace
without our old choices baring their teeth.

Tell me about the voices,
the kind and the cruel;
Tell me what conjures them out of the night,
the tricks you use to silence them,
and why they never work.

Tell me what drove you
down the long corridors of your life;
the loves, the fears,
the forces that pulled and pushed you
through your hours and days.

Tell me why you are so mean
to that flawed and beautiful pilgrim
who knew so little, but tried so hard;
why you can't give them the same grace
you would show any other soul

And then when you're done,
and your words are spent,
sit with me a while, and I will tell your story;
half remembered and half embellished
as all stories are,

and, if you are quiet, and very brave
you will hear it for the first time,
as any stranger would.

You will blink. You will smile,
and tell me that, after all, it was good.

- JOHN BIGLANDS