

too little too late

with my feet on the pavement, i strike a swell.....
somewhere deep in the earth. there's dirt under the pavement -
i know this, i try to remember -- the pavement is but a small and shallow shell
over the layers and layers of geological formations
that ultimately lead to the heat of the earth's core.
but still.....it seems just so damn Solid here, under my feet.
i'm walking home from the bus stop, from a meeting where everyone sat,
tense and cramped, in a back room filled with boxes,
making impassioned pleas for diversity and courage
on this one tiny part of the titanic
that we, the people, still hold as our own.
their voices are swimming through my head as the pavement passes
....so firm....beneath my feet as i walk.
i pass a couple, fashionably dressed - he with leather jacket, she in high heels....
she's saying something about 'five dozen roses'.....
they continue past me, i wonder if they feel the earth under the pavement
under their feet.....because i still can't.
i mean, i Know that it's there, I can think about it rationally, i can convince my head....
but i can't seem to convince my feet, which continue to walk angrily, angrily along.
i pass a row of trashcans - five blue ones, for recycling, and one black one, for trash.
they are all overflowing.
i smile a little, in spite of my angry feet, remembering statistics about recycling
thinking, comparatively, that's a pretty good percentage.
then thinking, comparatively, though, it's still too little, too late.
yes, the soles of my feet cry out to me as they hit the pavement,
too little too late, considering what's been lost.
celilo falls ... the salmon ... old growth forests ... the appalachian mountains,
i could go on, naming the names, pointing the fingers, waving my angry fist...
with all life on earth in the balance,
the recycling bins in their petroleum plastic.....
it all seems too little, too late.
i look up, for a moment, from glaring at the pavement, and see roses growing in dirt
not quite five dozen, but beautiful - pink, red and yellow, lining the street.
i stop and smell the roses, picking one for my love from the commons....
one rose, held out shyly from behind my back
as i enter our apartment door, singing out his name
and he looks up, smiling,
breathing in the aroma of her coy, flirting face
as he looks back at me, beaming, I hear the rose asking
is it truly too little, too late?

By jenka soderberg