

Falling into First Year

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WR 121

I am falling into college
The blue lights burn bright against my skin
Sunburns from a different sun

A bluer sun

I type the words
Hurrying
Before the brain can attack any form of life imperfect
Any form of humanity
Any form of me

It was Jane Smiley who said
“Every first draft is perfect
Because all the first draft has to do is exist”

Studying quiet at the library
My fingers cramping from the speed
That I press the keys
And to my horror
I reread

I scour wasteland

Finding bits of straw next to a pile of shit in a horse's stall
Spinning the straw into golden string
Like Rumpelstiltskin
And I devise a plan

Connecting words and ideas like a big game of connect the dots
Until it is perfect
It never is

Still, I try
Strive for the unattainable
Swim against the current
Repeat the words over and over again in my head
Same form, different subject:

Change the word "said" to the word "screamed"
Change the word "worked" to the word "toiled"
Change the word "try" to the word "fall"

I am falling into first year
Tired
Drowning
Wanting to give up

But you cannot write stanzas flowing
Cascading down mountains
Creating valleys
Without first writing horse shit

And you cannot fly
Flap your wings in the air
Watch over the beauties this world has to offer
The stanzas you so lovingly created

Without first falling

Smiley, Jane. "Jane Smiley > Quotes > Quotable Quote." Goodreads, n.d.
<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/812901-every-first-draft-is-perfect-because-all-the-first-draft>.