

STILL LIFE
(the nature of generosity)

*Consider the still life,
So many painters have:*

*The round alabaster bowl, heavy
and deep in the golden light
coming as it does, soft, from
some steady source.
It demands attention,
sliding as it does, easily,
into the casual eye—
the whole of the whole of it.*

*There is the pear, green and yellow,
the ever so slight blush of pink.
Nothing else quite like this
unbalanced shape,
the sensual curve of itself.
And it knows its own appeal—
it can be selfish in this way.*

*And the grapes, purple and round,
each one full of itself,
clustered in a kind of deranged balance.
They exude their own transience,
mischievous, ready to disappear
one by one—
Juice, their entire substance.*

*Perhaps the orange, green at the poles,
the warm promise of heat between them,
the navel poking out in shameless fertility,
and the small even dimples smoothed
to a polish—
too fragile to the cold.*

*But, there is the apple, always,
red or green in all possible shades,
somehow heavier and harder
than all the rest.
Dappled, bright, shiny and substantial—
quiet in all its solid sufficiency.*

*The apple makes the center;
it gives to the still life,
the apple—
in all its shared generosity.*

—Brad L. Roghaar