

DAVID FEDO

A Park in Toronto

Late November,
and a late afternoon in a day of no sun—
not quite winter
but decidedly a wintry feel.
They say there may be snow by tomorrow.
No one else is in the park,
whose name I do not know:
I have it to myself,
with the wind
scattering the last fragments of leaves
into narrow drifts
against the shell of a stooped iron fence.
Not a single squirrel,
black or grey,
is to be seen.
Only a few sparrows
and a gathering of pigeons,
more motley than usual,
are brave enough to scavenge on this dead ground.

I stop for no reason and sit
in front of what once must have been
a great ornate fountain,
but whose granite base is now
utterly smashed on the side facing the street,
its twin spouts sheared off,
the sculptured lion's heads at the corners
fractured well beyond repair.

What is left of this discoloured heap
is overcome with graffiti—

fuck you America
Debbie sucks
kill Santa Claus

and the like,
most of it violent and ugly
or just crazy.
But for some reason,
in the fading November light,
these graphic messages from the heart—
cries so spontaneous and clear,
so free of artifice or even civilization—
seem more authentic to me,
whatever their madness or fury,
than anything in my soulless world,
including,
come to think of it,
this poem.