

WHEREIN WE AUDIT THE FOREST

*Destroying a rain forest for economic gain
is like burning a Renaissance painting to cook a meal.* E.O. Wilson

Seems each perceives this waking world sustains us
divergent as anyone's dreamscape; lands peopled with
beings strange as familiar, everyone's apprehension
of the same space (*spontaneous/preconceived*) quite different.

Why, where some see the growing girth of great trees
to be our fortune left standing and count such wondrous features as
fish, birds and all sylvan, aquatic, airborne, underground,
field and sea creatures rich treasures, per se,
still others (*often of just as good will*)
tote the wild world's true and best blessings mostly in silver;
silver, gold, copper, treasury notes, whathaveyou can be banked up or spent down
while value that cannot be so easily auctioned off to high and low bidders,
added by bookkeepers for a boardroom's stock offering
or taxed by the nation, a state or some county so neatly (*no coin roll,
till drawer nor prospectus can hold them*) must be written in red.

And yet, it seems: if we people are also earth's creatures,
then to arrive at the true and best value (*for centuries*)
of what old forests survive (*seedlings, tall trees or fallen*)
and of all life surrounds us these millions of years and still growing
most or only by taking nature's weight in gold, silver, treasury paper's
to set mercenary's thumb too hard and too long on life's scale
leaving scant space for birds' hollow bones, talons, tail and flight feathers;
small place for thick bark, snags, high crowns nor wide boughs
where owls, murrelets, flying squirrels, red voles can nest;
even fewer cold, clean flowing streams so the salt scales of silver-side salmon,
trout, eels and other sea creatures may swim their ways home to spawn;
nor we humans so easily find rest in the rare shade of old trees' park glades
to escape money's hoarding, roading, falling, stripping, dozing,
grinding, shipping, burning, chipping, spraying,
well oiled count down machine.