

## SEARCHERS AND DECIDERS

We begin by sampling, selectively  
the excrescences of Nature's riches  
then willfully tune in on the coded beat

of her tinkerer's drum. To bind in the force  
of a differential equation, to model,  
reduce...ah, that is power,

control, and in the end  
not too difficult,  
for some of us,  
smart kids,  
have learned our lessons well.

The patterns pulse on, to be revealed  
to careful listeners in Osaka  
and Heidelberg, as well as Ithaca.

So there we are, uncharismatic  
heroes of the myth of progress  
oh how we love to preen

before each other, in the finery  
of our jargon, the intricacies  
we trace in seeming chaos.

But the world has invented other  
most needed players of the game,  
shepherds of men and goods,

slaughterers, advocates and fighters.  
They who choose the time  
to heal or kill, compress

our knowledge to power their tools.  
Our tools.

They manage, in good will  
and once  
in a while  
drop bombs  
and kill sweet lakes too.

And if we think they rule  
the world unwisely, I vouch  
we'd do no better.

Some of the searchers have qualms:  
Are we then at fault, for having  
in our precision of the electrons'

perky dance in alloy lattices loosed into  
the world the ken of beams, sheets,  
tank wheels with which they weld

the world's doom? We posit, for  
that is all we opt to do, that those  
tunes and pirouettes of mind

and matter might have been  
allowed to lie unformed, unmined  
and we the better for it.

But no, no. The ur-secrets of Nature  
don't lie there passively. They  
grow into our minds like dandelions,

they strangle us with their imminence  
and we in turn are Nature's  
garden tool for their unveiling.

They will not be concealed.  
And so...the feeders and the sellers,  
the priests and governors, have

cast us players in a tragedy. In  
holy madness fed by the weed of what  
we learn, we learn, deprived of choice,  
the things that my harm us.

It is our pain to know, to know,  
the dewy glimmer

of the snake

fernshoot,

as it unfurls,

unhid,

to consume us.