

The Comedian

The smell is rusted and wet. Heavy, how iron can smell when it sits in the rain and the dew and the fog.

The crows have all gone north. Coyotes stay out of town. Insects are slow.

Behind the house, other side of the fence: the breeze.

You think of luxury, of cholera in faraway lands.

It seems closer to the neighbor's. You haven't seen him lately. Someone should call.

Friends drop by. They park by the fence, climb out. You meet them at the fence, unlock the gate.

"What's that smell?" they say.

"Something back there," you say. "It doesn't seem to be human."

They think you are trying to be funny, and you are.