

For Primo Levi
A Docu-poem

Tell Me

What does the wine taste like
when lying dormant in the barrel?
What does skin feel like
when it has grown old and calloused?
How heavy are the weary wings of an aging dove?
How does a rose petal smell
when it has fallen from the flower?
How does a violin sound
with half its strings amiss
and awash in the lost light of the
blind who search for any sunset?

Does not the wine grow sweet when allowed to breath?
Are not a grandmother's hands as soft and beautiful
as a child for the care they have given?
Does not time braid circles between
hours, dawn to dawn in limitless flight?
Does not a rose petal, rescued from the earth,
stroked between two fingers, release its scent
greater in death than in life?
And is not one note played in perfect pitch,
resonated through graceful sighs,
smell like the infinite sky where it will hear itself
and return for the sightless and the dove to feel?

S. Tinley
'04