

Things I Noticed

The second thing I remember noticing that morning was how one of my goldfish had a face that was a dead ringer for Bob Dylan's face, and this distracted me briefly from the first thing I had noticed which was that a large branch from the maple tree out front had fallen through my garage. This would not have been a big deal except that I knew from then on I would never be able to hear Bob's voice without picturing little Goldie opening and closing her mouth as if asking me soulfully, "How does it feeel?" The insurance guy came later that day and did what insurance guys do, and soon the branch was chainsawed into firewood, and the arborist said it was lucky it didn't fall on my bedroom, that the whole tree should be taken down, it was an accident waiting to happen, it was only a matter of time. But really you could say that about anything, couldn't you? how it's only a matter of time before the earthquake—the Big One—or the deadly virus, the Yellowstone volcano, the spoiled shrimp, the beta-amyloid grout that hardens around your brain cells until you are left sitting in a soft chair in a dayroom somewhere, your daughter leaning forward, waiting for you to say something, do something besides open and close your mouth, a day when all the people from then on will be a complete unknown. So I'll keep the tree, thank you very much, use it every day like a gun pointed at my head, live and drink iced tea in its shade until I don't, and in the meantime I'll post a YouTube video of my goldfish that I bet goes viral, a little Dylan in the background singing in his piscatorial way how "when you ain't got nothing, you got nothing to lose."

Wade Bentley teaches and writes in Salt Lake City. His poems have been published widely in journals such as Cimarron Review, Best New Poets, Rattle, Antiphon Review, Pembroke Magazine, and New Orleans Review. A full-length collection of his poems, *What Is Mine*, was published by Aldrich Press in January of 2015. You may visit wadebentley.weebly.com for complete information about his publications and awards.