"YOU AND I," A MOMENT OF HAPPINESS
YOU AND I SITTING ON THE VERANDAH
APPARENTLY TWO, BUT IN
WE FEEL THE FLOWING
YOU AND I, WITH THE GIRL
AND THE BIRDS SINGING
BE WATCHING US, ALL
THEM WHAT IT MEAN
CRESCENT MOON
IKE WILL BE IN
EXY FOOTHOLD
THE
LILY
RIDGE

Poetry by Jim Blackburn
Virus Vigil by Isabelle Scurry Chapman
The Coot

Among the Sacahuista sloughs
On the Texas coastal prairie
East of 281 near Encino.

The coots dot the surface
Of a flooded grass meadow—
Sparkling green shoots of cellulose
Embraced by sweet blue water
That flows above and below the ground
Ever so slowly
East toward the Laguna Madre.

Watching the black duck-like birds
With the white slash of a bill,
It becomes clear why men the age
Of me and my friends are called “old coots”.

As we drive up, the coots run
Across the water surface,
Not quite able to get airborne-
Vacillating between flying and lighting,
And when their footsteps
No longer crease the smooth flat surface,
They just chug along—
Not fast, not hurried,
Just grazing and gazing.

But most of all
They murmur to each other non-stop,
As if talking under their breath,
Commenting upon the way of the day,
Commenting on the newest issue to pass before
Their collected wisdom,
Offering comments and quips,
Basking in friendships formed long ago,
Old coots living through another good day.