

## The American Dream

I hear the unformed question  
that sleeps restlessly  
when we awaken  
for our morning coffee.  
I see it closed within ourselves  
locked in briefcases  
carried down bright corridors  
of our post-modern fortresses.  
The well-tended atriums  
where sun-light is allowed  
a few plants in cubicles  
the only wild things left.  
All other lines straight  
and corners squared  
like square-headed gods  
of artificial intelligence  
on alters at every desk  
furniture walls workers even  
color-coordinated  
everything in its place.

No room for questions  
that lurk beyond the gates.

Fitness centers churn out bodies  
the look like gods  
yet doctor offices are filled  
hospitals prosper therapists  
have not enough hours  
to finish their paper work.  
And suits against them all  
pile up like clothing racks  
at a bargain sale.

We go about getting and spending  
rise each morning shower deodorize  
and dress stylishly  
build barriers of information  
against the non-linear  
and noise that speeds us on our 9 to 5's  
rush to and from kissing children  
good-bye and hello.

The latest shiny things conceived  
gluttonize us.

We toast each other after hours  
with crystal wine glasses  
pretending love and wisdom.

But there is no escape  
from the cast holes  
in our protective atmosphere  
no escape  
from a Chernoble of our own  
from nuclear winter  
formed by our myopic hearts.

Disney World Club Med  
the fulfillment of our dreams.  
We dance and do not touch  
we cannot hear the message  
beneath the music's heavy beat.  
It drums out the question  
that cries in the night:

"It is for this I live?"

*Maryam Mallin-Dubin*

