

Stigma, I Think

stigma
I think: stigmata
I imagine Jesus Christ
persecuted and hanging on his cross
I wonder if Jesus was ever bullied
faith in God doesn't do much to heal the sting of cruel words
ostracism
I think of an ostrich
standing out among all the other birds
being different
I understand why he'd bury his head in the sand
if he can't see it, it's not a problem
no matter how much they laugh
the cold shoulder
I picture a person alone on an iceberg
left there by the people who couldn't stand them
even if they escape and get home again
they'll always feel cold inside
and no one will listen
accepting
I picture someone getting a prize
unwrapping a present made of friendship and gratitude
and the joy that someone, finally, is there to receive it
today is a holiday
the anniversary of the day
that you found the courage to give the gift of yourself
love
I think of Valentine's Day cards and brightly-colored hearts
and something else that I don't have words for
and never will
a word that everyone uses
and thinks they understand, but they don't
we don't have to understand to know that it's all that we want
the second gift that comes afterward
that everyone wants to open
if only they were given the chance to
belong