

Michael Estabrook == Three Poems

because reading it lifted me up and out of my humdrum existence

I recall the first time I read
Leaves of Grass
all the way through
as a medical sales rep
carrying it with me faithfully
as I trudged through airport lounges and hotel rooms
diners, doctors waiting rooms, company lobbies –

because it's Shakespeare I have to do it

Saw Denzel Washington in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*
on Broadway a few years back.
When he was asked why he bothered
doing a play for \$1000 a week
when he got \$20 million for a motion picture he said
with a look of incredulity –

because it's so cold outside

Sometimes I become completely overwhelmed
by merely being in her presence
like this afternoon
at McDonald's with the grandchildren
suddenly I'm choked with emotion
barely able to speak
while simply watching her
sitting there eating her salad, quietly, unassumingly.
I had to work at not crying
dabbing at my eyes with a crumpled McDonald's napkin.
Guess my eyes are watering –

Michael Estabrook has been publishing his poetry in the small press since the 1980s. He has published over 20 collections, a recent one being *The Poet's Curse, A Miscellany* (The Poetry Box, 2019). He lives in Acton, Massachusetts.