

## *Two Voices in a Meadow*

*Richard Wilbur*

*Tuesday, August 25th, 2015*

### **A Milkweed**

Anonymous as cherubs  
Over the crib of God,  
White seeds are floating  
Out of my burst pod.  
What power had I  
Before I learned to yield?  
Shatter me, great wind:  
I shall possess the field.

### **A Stone**

As casual as cow-dung  
Under the crib of God,  
I lie where chance would have me,  
Up to the ears in sod.  
Why should I move? To move  
Befits a light desire.  
The sill of Heaven would founder  
Did such as I aspire.

OF THE two voices in this poem, the milkweed seems to have the better one: the sentiment is beautiful and the words have what you'd call a nice mouth-feel. The stone's verse is ugly and awkward, maybe almost seeming like a simple case of bad writing. Whatever the verse's origin Wilbur chose to preserve this contrast. In an interview ([http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/s\\_z/wilbur/imageinterview.htm](http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/s_z/wilbur/imageinterview.htm)), he said "the milkweed's speech is indeed written in one of my voices and was used for the sister's funeral in a genuine and appropriate way. But the other voice—the 'slob' voice of the stone, is also one of my voices."