

Ron
Padgett

It was hard to decide
which was more likeable,
the amoeba or the paramecium.
There was a certain charm
in being of only one cell
and another charm in wiggling.
Charles Darwin
was rather likeable too.
He felt that over a great span of time—
a span so great that it can take your breath away
if you think about it too clearly—
simple organisms evolve into more complex ones.
The amoeba doesn't have to decide
what to have for lunch
but the chipmunk in the road
has to decide whether to run
this way—no! that way!—
and you have to decide
whether to swerve or just hold your breath.
The necessity of deciding
is at the origin of thinking.
(I think!)

Lying in bed this morning,
trying to decide whether to get up
and write down these thoughts,
I hesitated because I wondered
if the pleasantness I had in lying there thinking them
would still be there when I opened my eyes
and wrote them down.
I was a little like the chipmunk
for a moment
and now I'm like a man.

