

## Stone Bench at Noon

Paul Bluestein

Cloistered at noon in a Zen garden I sat  
cross-legged on the centered stone bench  
while a fence-sitting squirrel  
on the lookout for danger, stood watch.  
The whistle of the Southern-Pacific  
in the distance and an airliner descending  
along its flight path, swirled  
tranquility and quiet contemplation  
together with 21st century chaos,  
but I was glad just to be in that place,  
shaded by the tulip trees.