

Front and Center

(location, location, location)

If you feel
you must buy the house
at the end of the cul-de-sac,
stick to your guns.
Don't settle for less.

You could be
like Wild Bill Hickok
who knew
because of the way
he had lived his life
he could never afford
to sit with his back
to the saloon doors—
but one day in Deadwood
he forgot.

*Pure Delite
(just for fun)*

Left Brain – Right Brain Dementia

A holy shout – transmitting
Beautiful poetic creations to me
Coming repeatedly from beyond
Deepest inner space – rings out.
Energy pulse of creation's call
Flows into my receptive mind.
Gratefully I copy waves of words.
Here are unique illuminating
Images never before envisioned.
Jumping from God, arching thru me,
Kept as lyric melodious verse. Yet
Losing all as *the I* determines they
Must be
Numbered
Or at least
Put in alphabetical order.

Q
R
S
T
U
V
W
X
Y
Z.

Unrelated Stanzas

(As per Mary Oliver's *Dream Work*, p. 50)

The more I listen to Jimmy Buffett
the more my shaving
becomes optional and irregular,
and the more my shoes hurt my feet.

Synchronicity and serendipity
are so much sweeter
when preceded by adequate
planning and preparation.

I just like
the way
butterflies
make me talk.

There is a world of emotional difference in
having a dollar extra and a dollar not enough,
and the happy-go-lucky husband or wife
should seriously consider that point
when dealing with a prudent spouse.

Time flows along
on the wavy lines of wrinkles.
If I marched on
we would have forehead footprints.

Word Wanderings

The wind blows and the chimes tinkle.
Two tired, familiar, expected verbs,
adequate in their own way—
asynonymical but easily parallelesque
because chimes don't blow and wind doesn't tinkle.

But that's neither here nor there.
Yet it is both here and there
as the English language can show you,
because what I wanted to say
before I was sidetracked by the asides is—
the wind blows over the open chimney pipe
sounding a hollow, creepy swoosh
that if you hold your lips and your heart just right
becomes a whistle that calls the dog
and announces a happy day.

*From "Old Man Eating Alone in a Chinese
Restaurant" by Billy Collins*

Billy mentioned the light
which fell through the big windows that time of day
italicizing everything it touched.

And instantly he had copyrighted italicizing
in that sense
and I am jealous.

It is lyrical poetic use,
invokes a beautiful poetic scene,
and on inspection,
specifically defining the term used that way
is impossible — sublime poetry!

My spell check wants
a question mark
after sublime poetry.

This is not
a poetic spell check.

Out of Alphabet by February

When a highly tolerant and optimistic person
meets a readily judgmental and pessimistic person,
they may fall in love, and work hard to blend.

When they do, it can be
like Katrina hitting New Orleans
and leaving the city in better shape
than before the hurricane.

Cleaning up the daily debris
will be a lifelong joy,
or it can be—
Galveston 1900 everyday.

Urban Renewal

At this Sunday morning's daybreak
I post at a knife-signed, green picnic table
in a two-cacti-landscaped mini city park
on the south shoulder of U.S. Hwy. 90,
my heart guarding a residually regal row
of old, tired main street buildings
cornice crown chiseled — Adam Sloan 1928,
and enthroned on the highway's north side.

Once purposeful, necessary, essential,
soul and sinew saving stores—
dry goods for blue jeans, hardware for shovels
and grocery for bread and for beans,
now gaspingly revived and embarrassingly
hawking imported ceramic cats,
twenty yogurt flavors and chocolate,
bruised books and tacky silver crosses—
all festered with blisters and bunions of art
pinioned to the castle's wailing walls.

Though scarred and scuffed
with a modern graffiti logo,
only the post office survives
with a venting vestige of dignity
announcing as did the train depot
of long ago — Marathon, Texas, 79842.

The Nature Channel Brings You – The Sins of Rocky Squirrel

He looks in. Sees 'em. Smells 'em
down there, delicious, desirable,
discarded squirrel delicacies—
burger bun and black banana.

Chattering, "Come to papa, yum yums."
Rocky Squirrel circles the rim
of the topless
black metal *Midwest Waste Dumpster*.

Launching a hundred slides
down every inch of edge,
the tireless, timid swordsman thrusts
and fear parries.
Each plunge leaves in view
only hangy-ony toes and flit-flit tail.

The vertical sides are slick.
The bin is deep.
Look at that tail snap!
He is pissed and passionate.

Will he stay
Rocky, the hungry squirrel,
or will he become
Rocky, the landfill squirrel?

Tune in tomorrow.
Will desire overcome discretion
and Rocky become
a trash truck's compactor impression?

Tastes Like Chicken

Rupert Richardson Squirrel—
not nature's brightest pearl.

From my window I see
you climb up that pine tree
bound for the top of your world.

You Wallenda across the wire line
to the box that transforms heat to shine.

You wriggle right in,
fry yourself crispy thin,
and dark in my room is unfurled.

Crawling Out from Under Partly Cloudy

Outside the tempest storms—
West Texas thunder, lightning
wind and rain and pea size hail
and golf ball size hail and softball
size hail and TV touted tornado.

After a feeling of forever — angry
attack of the elements is repelled.
Sprinkling straggler raindrops
pepper peeled ragged roof remains.
Final rolling thunder-guns
fire in the distance.

Is it over for the night? Tune in to
KTAB-32. Randy will tell you
after a word from our sponsor—
if you still have electricity
if you still have a house
if you're still alive.

Now truly! Our favoring God choice
has again regained control.
Preserving our and His
little pseudo-religious community
save a sacrificial bit of sinful materialism.
Praise the grace of Jesus.

Capture and Release

Three days ago
a big green horsefly
buzzed into my kitchen.

She appliquéd herself
to one plastic ribbon slat
of the blond window blinds
over my steel kitchen sink.

I ignored her
until tonight when
I wanted to practice
my newly learned
"thinking with my heart."

So I focused on her.
I asked about her dreams,
desires, longings, regrets.
She flew away.
I assumed I had failed
to communicate with my heart,

but I turned and
spied her bump-kissing
the kitchen window.
I cracked the door,
and she zipped out—
whirring fly profanities
about captivity.

George Washington Carver said,
anything
will give up its secrets
if you love it enough,
but he was talking about peanuts.

My fly
didn't want love or peanuts.
She wanted out—
so she patronized me
and sought opportunity.

I vastly underestimated
this technique—
thinking with my heart.
It had almost made her
human.

Mutual Maid Service

Beware of a person
who hangs their commitments
on the clothes line of irresponsibility,
allows you to bring in the laundry,
and then wants to know
why you haven't folded them yet.
Do more than beware. Run. Especially
if you can still hear the washer running.

Unilateral maid service works
only in hotels
and other situations
where you're just passing through.

But mutual maid service
is a beautiful thing
that results in clean clothes
and a house full of sweet smelling joy.

Simply Elegant Times

All I want
is to have
a personal relationship
with a baby gnat.

I, in the rapturous
early morning sunshine
and birdsong
of this oncoming day,
sit still.

Alert and aware,
I tune
my presence of mind.
Buzzing a bold introduction
the baby gnat approaches.

I greet her
with the respect and attention
she deserves—
and that will be my template
for today's relationships
with all of life.

These are simply elegant times
when all I need
to begin a great day
is to have
a personal relationship
with a baby gnat.

Taoist Tangle

Lao Tzu says — the value of a room
is not measured
by its wooden walls,
but by the empty space within.

The value of a water pitcher
is not measured by its clay form,
but by the empty space within.

The value of my intelligence
is not measured by my skull,
but by the — oh, never mind.

*Litely on my mind
(her)*

Easy Keeper

A good woman is much rarer
than a good horse or dog.

Good for all is defined as:
responds to praise and dependability
and is satisfied the next day with
exactly what they got the day before.

If you find that woman though—
be satisfied with one.

Don't try to keep a pack or a herd
'cause even Solomon in all his wisdom
couldn't keep 'em very well in groups.

Very Soon Susan

Now's the time to ache
and cry and plan,
not a time
to be patient.

This time's not a time
to throw caution to the wind
but

to fly with life's winds—
on peaceful wings of trust
to a blissful paradise
of unending love
and laughter

gliding into the soft comfort
of our time of eternal joy
that we can share
with all.

Our time is coming.

Taking a Chance on Love

Ok,
you go first.
No, you first
no, you
okaaaay. Wait!

Ok,
on the count of three
I will if you will.

1 — 2 — 2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Okaaaay. Wait!

Ok,
Let's close eyes,
hold hands,
and jump together.
Okaaaaaaaay.

Wow!
