

# Tupelo Press

~ Live from the Loft

## The Million-Line Poem

I am such a fool and frightened,  
but weather calmed me when finally it came.

*(Jennifer Michael Hecht)*

Yesterday I moved through the newly reopened town  
where aftermath after aftermath slowed me.

*(Anonymous, VT)*

Sown with the stolen threads of youth, the back-break stoop  
of the fallen, every cottoned row: our field of dimming stars & stripes.

*(Nancy Flynn, Portland, OR)*

(Oh, you'd be frightened, too, to be such a fool  
as to imagine weather never coming.)

*(Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs, ME)*

Though cicada-like I sang my song  
and published wide my noise.

*(Anne Harding Woodworth)*

Sartre was standing in the sun, murky and figural like a Munch painting,  
a book in each hand, as if to say, "These are my wings, I'm a shorebird."

*(Desmond Kon Zhicheng-Mingdé, Singapore)*

Whether or not the weather gets hot  
each wind worries that the night might not.

*(Kevin Thaddeus Fisher-Paulson, San Francisco, CA)*

The rain unbuttoned all my buttons  
and night began the day again.

*(Lisa King, Albemarle, NC)*

Black clouds closed my scarlet sky,  
but lightning awed me with its passions.

*(Wanda McCollar)*

I recognize you from the beats in my heart  
You are my soulmate.

*(Marie Toole, Delray Beach, FL)*

Paper shover, pothole filler,  
iridescent bird of the gray night.

*(Edward Nudelman, Beverly, MA)*

What calms you? Does it come from inside?  
Cloud the color of woodsmoke, upturned leaves.

*(Richard Chetwynd, Caribou, ME)*

When it came in its strange luxury of falling petals, light—  
in its sudden softness, breezes, breath of every hue.

*(Sarah Maclay, Venice, CA)*

I am such a fright and weathered,  
be a dear fool, come to me calm.

*(Ellen Doré Watson, Conway, MA)*

Then the sky and ocean brightened  
and I could avoid the blame (or shame).

*(Elisavietta Ritchie, Broomes Island, MD)*

Still, I want to be embraced by pine birth, cone-spangled,  
electrified by full moonlight at the peak of a mountain.

*(Diana Norma Szokolyai, Brooklyn, NY)*

I heard a bird's three notes, a little set  
of steps to a place at the back of my atlas.

*(Diana Adams, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada)*

Look how the sky splinters into tiny white dazzles  
and it rains again inside the house.

*(Lisa Zimmerman, Fort Collins, CO)*

Fluttering and shaken, I find myself  
chasing updrafts, lost among the fallen.

*(Jessica Lafortune, Orlando, FL)*

Farewell, fair weather! I must search every peakless  
caldera for my daughter's dust, her blue moonbeams.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

And I want you to come to me for shelter  
from whatever storm I'm standing in.

*(Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs, ME)*

No storm that cannot be replaced,  
nor any space—faceless or enclosed.

*(Nancy Naomi Carlson, Silver Spring, MD)*

Then having pondered the standing in, why, and for what reason . . . Know  
I'm no longer passive, but beginning to move with elemental forces coinciding, not colliding.

*(Charlene Swoboda, York, PA)*

inside hypodermic rain, with chemical / heart / fur  
you are arp-shaped movie with swollen teeth

*(George McKim, Raleigh, NC)*

Our bodies: firestorms spun from cyclones spun from  
the star, pulsing, we name *Derecho*. Straight One.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

For, whatever the storm I'll weather it  
with the help of your need.

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

The draft horse of grief is gray.  
It pulls the plow regret has made.

*(Dianna Henning, Janesville, CA)*

I want to give you the whole of creation, a song to embrace,  
an ecology of belonging, added joy for the struggle.

*(Mary Ann Mayer, Sharon, MA)*

Then let's get out of here, my love, my voice,  
my life, my daughter, since we have the choice . . .

*(Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs, ME)*

From whatever paradise we have lost  
We will cull the last unforgiving fruit.

*(Lyle Gregory)*

Slim-necked, snowy-white egrets slowly  
Are coming back to Capitol Lake, cautiously.

*(Sandra Forman Robert, Baton Rouge, LA)*

Yes, I wore the old coat, the loved old coat,  
but it failed to cloak me for once in its life.

*(Chris Weygandt Alba, Paso Robles, CA)*

Oh, cloak, my dear fur-of-heart, my faux Mink Pelt—  
gnaw away. Shear my hair. Let despair be . . . felt.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

I shrug into sky lined with satin,  
its pockets stuffed with grief and cloud.

*(Terry Bodine, Lynchburg, VA)*

Go, then, good coat, I will you to the Goodwill—  
you have outgrown me.

*(Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs, ME)*

you wear night's plumage like a vestment of small fires  
in blue music, stars stumble through your thousand fingered trees

*(George McKim, Raleigh, NC)*

you sink, sink into rooted darkness, quiet  
descent as of snow or ashes

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

but stars are pointed, can't enter the trunk holes. Woodpeckers call  
in sick. If not, we may be told the upstanding trees are hollow.

*(Nicholas YB Wong, Hong Kong, China)*

The world tumbling with goldenrod & asters, I walk  
to find a way out of myself, to harvest the stillness of a pond.

*(Suellen Wedmore, Rockport, MA)*

Cheer us then for the trip below—  
are no we no there no yet no

*(Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs, ME)*

October, come on down. Boughs-in-tatters, it's my pleasure  
to lease your pre-owned leaves. The going bargain, to be sure.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

i follow the footsteps of rain  
night into day the journey to you

*(artiste-te, Paradise Valley, AZ)*

Some nights, breathing is the work of strange rivers.  
Some nights, the wind cannot be imagined as breath.

*(Stacey Waite, Lincoln, NE)*

Some days one lives for sleep.  
But who's ever dreamed of breathing?

*(Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs, ME)*

In silence we focus on the midnight Yogis. A comet tail exhales,  
the gibbous moon holds her breath, Orion poses with Canis Major.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

I hear the astronomer claim that the Sun is really white,  
not yellow—Ah! all my love sonnets on sheets of sunshine!

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

Stung by the night sky, inscrutable, your  
Orion is mere figment. Nothing clear, nothing sure.

*(Deb McAlister)*

Vroom-vroom goes the souped-up car, in imitation  
Of some cosmic crank, adrift on a map without mountains.

*(Tunku V)*

Feeling travels by bus  
on a badly rutted road.

*(Cindy Bousquet Harris)*

the dream reawakens me to remembering  
not remembering where I have been or who I love

*(Gina Betcher, Kalamazoo, MI)*

The grown-ups were sound asleep in their clocks  
and they have no way out of their dreams.

*(Joseph Leo Harris)*

As for us? We refused to rouse. Our children, climbing  
our mossy towers, tolled "Occupy! Occupy! Occupy!"

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

Silvery lamentations streamed from my stained pen  
Deep in the abyss of my soul, sonorously within.

*(Sandra Forman Robert, Baton Rouge, LA)*

To know dreams no good dreamers will wear  
their looped belts, stars tucked in their tales.

*(Tammy Tillotson, Chase City, VA)*

I can always make sense of an animal  
like the state of grace preceding the end.

*(Hélène Cardona, Santa Monica, CA)*

The griefs of loss, the gifts of nature  
On a beautiful Monday morning.

*(Merle Levine, Greenport, NY)*

*Ghazal, "the word for love poetry" // Gazelle, a lovely leaping antelope // Grace, senseless leap to The Beloved*

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

Then let's not feed the cat prone to play  
the more to speed devouring of its prey.

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

On my doorstep—a boy wearing a tiger mask.  
*Do you want a real or a pretend treat?* I ask.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

On icy naked days when birch's bare bones grasp a waning sun  
I ache for warm sea breeze to whisper free this dust landlocked by barren soul

*(HeidiMarie Densmore, Woodstock, CT)*

"Here is the water-verb," said the gardener to the garden;  
"And here is your fruit-noun," said the garden to the gardener.

*(Kurt Brown, Santa Barbara, CA)*

Addra gazelles banish motives as they clear  
the tall savanna grasses of Topeka or Sudan.

*(Cindy Bousquet Harris)*

Lost in autumn: the silver-blue dragonfly wings  
painted new each time by an August sky.

*(Heather Hallberg Yanda, Alfred Station, NY)*

there were two doors: one to awakening, the other to despair  
she took them both

*(Deidra Greenleaf Allan, Flourtown, PA)*

*fig. plural "figs"; alias "apple"; personification "Millay";  
Anita's memory of her first love; hazel eyes; warm lips;*

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

Aye, and such a sudden shunt from defiant to deviant:  
If you're innocent and you know it, raise your hand.

*(Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs, ME)*

The trouble is, of course, the seep and spurt of love. It is,  
it isn't clearly made compounded of old ironies and crimes.

*(Mark Grinyer, Studio City, CA)*

For instance, the irony of water fountains, pennies  
and nickels griming their basins. Every coin, a penance.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

Diminished to reflection the ocean cannot crush my bones or feel the rhythm of the waves.  
Balance is fleeting, it is art, a moment with love void of hate.

*(Diane West King, Sugar Hill, NH)*

So why not? In the distance between no and yes, in this caravan of bodies  
explore what's ours and right here, a little geography.

*(Mary Ann Mayer, Sharon, MA)*

Beneath the moon, you are the sea. I am a river entering your mind.  
You are my mother, the water, inspiration for my soul.

*(Ed Roseman, Dansville, MI)*

storm I thrice this shame still lenten  
crime unspent torn sky from stone

*(Kazim Ali, Oberlin, OH)*

It is, it isn't factored from fermented grapes and fizz  
or divided by the differences of minus, plus, and times—

*(Bob Brooks, Concord, MA)*

My soul, it limps along, cruising the bars  
while wearing hats to cover all the scars.

*(Laura A. Ciraolo, Glendale, NY)*

Sweet heart we used to make love, now all we do is fight,  
I cry myself to sleep many a night.

*(Shirley Smothers)*

Through cracks and cavities over brooks and banks  
we crawled through silence as heartbeats sank

*(Calum MacDonald, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia)*

Old Kronos' broken rhymes, the seed and hurt of love,  
our rubbled course, it is, it isn't, clear, appeased by love

*(Sue Chenette, Toronto, Ontario, Canada)*

And poetry, our own and others', sustains the way,  
the words and thoughts become our passageway.

*(MaryEllen Letarte, Lunenburg, MA)*

But this love that you remember—might it be  
just what sails the surface of your memory?

*(Bob Brooks, Stockton Springs, ME)*

Our minds moving through words like  
body and desire, tree and belief.

*(Mike Puican, Evanston, IL)*

I love you . . . I love you . . . I love you! I scream silent at the God  
who made my love granite, to routinely weave a life beyond this night

*(HeidiMarie Densmore, Woodstock, CT)*

These times are not smooth rhymes, grief's weathered face  
grows grey, yet blossoms through love's dappled grace.

*(Ellen S. Jaffe, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada)*

This little pile of pebbles, ceramic shards, clouded glass—  
remember the mosaic it once was, the twine'd patterns?

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

Also those utter-hoards, sound-cairns, of old Irish odes:  
*D'Aithle Na bhFileadh* (by David Broderick from Cork).

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

They were once stars that streamed through a crack in the roof,  
dripped off the rafters, and into the bowl of my hands.

*(Mary-Sherman Willis, Woodville, VA)*

Now we wait for a star pointing north to explode,  
to shoot straight down into our waiting mouths.

*(Kasandra Larsen, New Orleans, LA)*

To spill, to share, to see them exposed to a new light,  
umbilical atmosphere inverted and above us

*(Emily Shearer, Fairfax Station, VA)*

The stars felt light in my hand, but I fell to the floor in awe and  
my body shivered with delight as my cat froze in his tracks.

*(Thomas Brogan, Richmond Hill, NY)*

This is the month when sky is anxious, a mollusk shell,  
a chest cracked open, gulls overhead turning black silhouettes.

*(Dan Spinella, North Adams, MA)*

Rivers of night run to the shallows now.  
Already, these stars slip in the west.

*(Marjorie Stamm Rosenfeld, Carlsbad, CA)*

~ the news is uprising, earthquake, tsunami, radiation, one story after another burned at the edges  
~  
~ the swallow's still-wet mud nest leans toward September ~ I would have written sooner ~

*(Veronica Patterson, Loveland, CO)*

It was then I understood beauty is a place made possible against a canvas  
of existence pulled tight by the brave laughter of children afraid of dark spaces.

*(Thomas Osatchoff, Los Angeles, CA)*

(now dare I read my life in my palm or these stars, their form  
once stitched against the heaven where weather roots itself)

*(Beth Kanell, Waterford, VT)*

It would take more than blood had I lost that much  
I would need the hillside of ivy

*(Allan Peterson, Gulf Breeze, FL)*

So more black rain dropped on every hot crying face under  
our roof light with rust asking about this child

*(Grace E. Reed, Portland, OR)*

The river fathoms my anger, rips  
boulders from the sides of the run.

*(Margaret S. Mullins, Jarrettsville, MD)*

Pulling the scarf over your nose, rubbing gloved hands together,  
you feel a sadness grounded in the greed you stand in.

*(Deborah Hughes, Boonton Township, NJ)*

Like an infant, mesmerized by her delicate reflection,  
you begin to see something fresh in the light, constant in the crisp air.

*(Tina Raye Dayton, Salisbury, MD)*

You dance with the other shadows,  
you try to find green again.

*(Carey Link, Huntsville, AL)*

The phlegm from my throat rose from my lips and oozed into a reservoir on my lower lip  
The flavor was sweet and salty, I pretended that it was caramel

*(Forrest Sung, Flushing, NY)*

Ice on the eaves, the town turns round  
in the crystal eye of the mind and snow comes down.

*(Marjorie Stamm Rosenfeld, Carlsbad, CA)*

What I say with my body  
You pay for with yours

*(Broc Rossell, Denver, CO)*

Thinking the ocean needs the land.  
Out of context its vastness isn't so formidable.

*(Deborah Hughes, Boonton Township, NJ)*

What we look forward to: the start of the rains,  
smell of earth and molds; promise of green.

*(Carol Dorf, Berkeley, CA)*

Yet, when the snow falls so fast,  
There's no sense shoveling till it stops.

*(Sandra Berris, Greenwich, CT)*

And the pigeons, thousands of them suddenly elevated to uccelli of romance  
A riotous bunch of lightness and promise as they lift en masse

*(Deborah Hughes, Boonton Township, NJ)*

What we miss: the wet underside of the squirrel,  
the sound of the rain stopping, yesterday's yellow.

*(Becky Dennison Sakellariou, Peterborough, NH)*

Try orange—first firings of the silent blast,  
its fallout whispering on grass.

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

Home  
Is where the tears fell

*(Karl Mullen)*

You hear the voice of who you were before  
you know again and again the difference.

*(Carol Ellis, Merced, CA)*

You left your imprint, like henna, on the map of my body,  
my wild cartographer, my ardent explorer.

*(Deborah Hughes, Boonton Twp, NJ)*

In exile again, I sob my old refrain: *don't turn around*  
*around turn don't do not no o no don't not do turn around*

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

And the sea will rush riotously forward,  
and the rocks will beat it back once again.

*(Ariana Nadia Nash, San Francisco, CA)*

I spun 'round: all in my head, a shred, poised, pouncing.  
The lone sound lost then found, winding down again, wound.

*(Cassandra Cleghorn, Williamstown, MA)*

Every morning I walk the lake path, lone gatecrasher.  
Ahead, in stagnate water, Sandhill Crane curtsy, witness.

*(Tina Egnoski, Barrington, RI)*

Your body as weapon.  
It caught me quite off guard.

*(Deborah Hughes, Boonton Twp, NJ)*  
there is among your memories  
one that has been lost beyond recall

*(Dru Fereday, Brooklyn, NY)*  
Churning and changing, we all rattle forward,  
forging new pathways to chase our best dreams.

*(Margaret S. Mullins, Jarrettsville, MD)*  
Leaves, now red, fall atop the mound under which lies  
our yellow-orange tabby. The azaleas will bloom again next fall.

*(Trina L. Drotar, Sacramento, CA)*  
I will still begin—will let those partitions  
strangle themselves with neglect.

*(Jan Keough, Cumberland, RI)*  
They will collapse into the rising earth, ripen  
into compost of venerable divisions, ancient schisms.

*(Becky Dennison Sakellariou, Peterborough, NH)*  
Enough of this dirt to dirt, dust to dust;  
let's stop shoveling dirt over ourselves.

*(Paul Sohar, Warren, NJ)*  
Breathe me in—slowly—I am the sweet air moving through you  
build your world again out of my love

*(Vivian Welton, Phoenicia, NY)*  
I will climb into a crevice along the roofline  
where mockingbirds and magpies won't enter.

*(Trina L. Drotar, Sacramento, CA)*  
I am the voice, ignorant of the moon,  
A bottomless vertigo, the histories I have leapt through

*(Dru Fereday, Brooklyn, NY)*  
Near streams in the woods surrounded by words and damp earth  
Unifier I call frozen water creator of wondrous births

*(Elizabeth P. Glixman, Worcester, MA)*  
With what blithe faith we lie down at night,  
Assuming, in the morning, that all will be light.

*(Reuven Goldfarb, Tzfat, Israel)*  
and you, how will you remember snow without me? Remember  
the Indian mound shaped like a man was cut in two by the county road

*(Rasma Haidri, Norway)*

I am sorry that the ten thousand things you dreamed of for your grandchild  
are now ten thousand tears.

*(Ann Perbohner, West Lebanon, NH)*

but I will send you recipes for recalling the frozen passages of your butterflyed mind;  
fold them in two and you will see how to startle your split brain back together again

*(Caroline Hagood, New York, NY)*

The morning was heavy with the scent of garlic and warm chiles  
a fine mist rose from the leaf-littered grass

*(Trina L. Drotar, Sacramento, CA)*

There's a feeling called "home", an embrace, a refuge  
from things divided, withered, torn.

*(Cindy Bousquet Harris)*

Which homes can endure all the coming storms and plunders?  
Bird-de-Coeur answers: *my nests of silk, matrix tender.*

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

In the presence of another's pain, he stood—a soothing void.  
One by one the leaves come down.

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

"I think heaven is not as holy  
as kissing you or planting flowers."

*(Kimberley Ann Rogers, Easthampton, MA)*

I bought a box of strawberries today. They were ripe & they were tart. I would like  
to share them with you. But not the satisfaction—

*(Rita Banerjee, Berkeley, CA)*

that is yours alone, yours to savor, yours to fold  
into the cartons of memory, recover in the white night of winter

*(Becky Sakellariou, Peterborough, NH)*

Come February you will dream about red keys,  
unsealed music boxes, ballets, demi-plies.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, NY)*

But for now I will joy in rust, yellow, bronze  
and not begrudge the trees their needful rest.

*(Cindy Bousquet Harris)*

As in 'I saw a last bee and felt for it'  
(you needn't know that, though).

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

To Earth's slumbering trees, arbors, woody cradles  
stars sing. Stars *do* sing! Lullabies, nocturnes, aubades.

*(Therese L. Broderick, Albany, New York)*

And *we* rested beneath ancient Sequoias  
wondered how much longer will they survive

*(Barbara MacKay, Fort Bragg, CA)*

Seismic, when the the shift occurs, from looking forward to looking back.  
When you become wise, not beyond your years, but for your years.

*(Susan Daniels, New York, NY)*

When then you must make something long: an axe  
at the base of something tall or a needle and thread and cloth.

*(Lisa McCool-Grime, Lompoc, CA)*

Or choose something small, smaller than a wild strawberry spotted  
beneath blue-gray leaves, reaching for that arrow of sunlight.

*(Becky Dennison Sakellariou, Peterborough, NH)*

Slowly, the settle-down of your city of noises, the urge of day  
with its freight whistle, bird lilt, car wheels on the asphalt, sighs.

*(Nancy Flynn, Portland, OR)*

Hydra's waters are warm, in the September sun  
As I await my beloved, after the day is done.

*(Sandra Forman Robert, Baton Rouge, LA)*

Canvas notes, loom page, floor thread ready  
to be touched, transformed, by brush, needle, song, the dancer's step.

*(Cindy Bousquet Harris, CA)*

If it's going to mean something,  
it had better mean something . . .

*(Christopher Buckley, Lompoc, CA)*

An angel tells, they leave  
their sheep, the shepherds see . . . Emmanuel.

*(Cindy Bousquet Harris, CA)*

Grace throws furthest, a great hurling arc under moon,  
one cat's eye yellow glass prize from clambake Sunday.

*(Catherine Keefe, Trabuco Canyon, CA)*

Clams that dove into deep fine sand,  
their feet like tongues pull gravity.

*(Janet Norman Knox, Bainbridge Island, WA)*

Tucked beneath a day's end arm, this treasure, light  
hidden from view for a few moments, waiting.

*(Rose M Smith, Columbus, OH)*

Bodies stretch out the miles between us; ions  
leap the chasm. Anyone can fall, few can fly.

*(David Sullivan, Santa Cruz, CA)*

But grief is chartreuse lamé wilting in a silk lined coffin, grace  
wrapped in papier-mâché is carnival glass, is ringmaster's token.

*(Kimberly Bredberg, Los Angeles, CA)*

Is being awake a natural state,  
is being asleep awareness of fate?

*(Susan Hankla, Richmond, VA)*

winter is the only poet  
who speaks with the violin of ashes

*(George McKim, Raleigh, NC)*

Lichen folds in the crux of birch tree  
limbs drinking pooled rain and loss.

*(Jill McCabe Johnson, Eastsound, WA)*

Time seeps through the crack, bringing us back  
to where we once thought we were.

*(Renée von Paschen, Vienna, Austria)*

We watch an hourglass, the full hour,  
and discover the value of each grain.

*(Michele Randall, Sanford, FL)*

toppled, still—a love slipped under wood  
stove with tinder burning beside counter crevice

*(Dawn Coutu, Concord, NH)*

I, split in half by the two doors once entered  
spin together this cracked skin of clay I've uncentered

*(Keenan Cheney, Portland, OR)*

to hum and wobble before righting itself, collapse  
mere gossip in the body's long hallways.

*(Elizabeth Drewry, Landrum, SC)*

The dead arrive in teapots, unhappy  
they've been foretold. They wanted to surprise us.

*(Hillel Schwartz, Encinitas, CA)*

*I see you, she says. I cannot hide my conscious,  
Not even from the dead.*

*(Pilar Graham, Coarsegold, CA)*

*And so it was as is  
As if it was never his*

*(Christine Floriani, Fresno, CA)*

*And you'll know it—it's like . . .  
*I love you* has reached you for the first time.*

*(Pilar Graham, Coarsegold, CA)*

*And the doorknob's greased axle whispers an echo  
Like the clicking off of machines reading one heavy line.*

*(Naomi Fast, Portland, OR)*

*you with the frigid, and no engine churning, through space-time  
strawberries to a new planet's shiver and taste*

*(Tucker Sampson, Henniker, NH)*

*Child-soldier: He narrates his story like an occupied dream / where tall grass hides  
And feeds a vacant gut / where bananas and casabas are to kill for—and to die for.*

*(HeidiMarie Densmore, Woodstock, CT)*

*The fire blooms in the desert, destroyer  
of worlds: glass flashed into blossoms, a gasp—*

*(Anna Leahy, Orange, CA)*

*Awash in HD signals. Is it time to pray?  
Smooth, unbroken screen. The remote always near.*

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

*I distance myself from a million ready-tongue poses  
preventing me from remembering you said *you'll always be**

*(Keenan Cheney, Portland, OR)*

*Will you be my shelter—my sanctuary—my safe haven  
After the ravages of Katrina, still unsettled, still unhealed*

*(Sandra Forman Robert, Baton Rouge, LA)*

*Knowing made it worse; anticipating accidental death is for no one  
life offers no control when the body's time is forcibly done*

*(Keenan Cheney, Portland, OR)*

*bitterly comes spring. cleaning, we find every garlic bulb  
in her winter cupboard has shot green through its skin.*

*(Lisa McCool-Grime, Lompoc, CA)*

though skin sloughs off, though it falls, in winter months,  
in spring, on summer's hottest days and coolest nights, it stays

*(Carlos Martinez, Ferndale, WA)*

the dust of eternity mingling with the dust we become. It  
only seems part of us; in fact we are the smaller part

*(Sheri Reda, Chicago, IL)*

Freshly aired black lace untarnished along the stones of Minister's Beach  
where the Aramaic-speaking stranger no longer persuades in palm greenery

*(David Moscovich, New York, NY)*

Faced with the horizon long enough, black fades to grey and grey  
stones darken. Listen for the footsteps of those who wander.

*(Lisken Van Pelt Dus, Pittsfield, MA)*

Across the plains, and the Roadrunner runs and kicks the dust behind him,  
"don't look back," they say, "keep running! keep running! Don't wander."

*(Jennifer Lenhardt, Camas, WA)*

Shades of pink and buttercup glitter on the fountain top, like  
gems of stored memories waiting to be sought.

*(Sarah Wentworth, Amherst, MA)*

Rose quartz—a summer romance,  
Citrine—that September sun's unkept promise.

*(Greg Sellers, Vicksburg, MS)*

A shadow ladders and lengthens  
content with its lonely climb.

*(Jim Sharp, Florence, MA)*

Another center stage on a photograph:  
dark train trailing busy feet . . .

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

Rails clacking steel grey faces  
Telling a long blue history of America

*(Aaron Williams, St. Louis, MO)*

Someone was counting syllables as if that might help  
Something was angering water It was me

*(Allan Peterson, Gulf Breeze, FL)*

in that winter garden of inward-growing snow,  
crystalline seeds sowing rows for next year's timid leaves

*(Ellen Parent, Danby, VT)*

That frozen pond a reckoning, even a foreboding  
No happy endings will there be, in our tangled history

*(Sandra Forman Robert, Baton Rouge, LA)*

A telephone in almost every room, each one switched  
to the silent setting. Will you never call? Or write me—once.

*(Jim Schley, South Strafford, VT)*

Distance is a test;  
Time is a pest.

*(Odo Simon Agbo, Doha, Qatar)*

When the rain smells like peppermint,  
cloud shapes, arctic curtains.

*(Cindy Bousquet Harris, CA)*

As though a curtain, its unselfish leaves,  
could be enough.

*(Amy Small-McKinney, Blue Bell, PA)*

Past history and hope dwell in your eyes,  
Such glory of love cannot be disguised.

*(Linda Maselli Richardson, Bolton, CT)*

The red bird's song in quiet trill,  
"brave, brave daffodil!"

*(robyncorum, Hartselle, AL)*

Imagine talking to a wall  
said the shaman to the Circle of Elders

*(Belinda Nicoll, Columbus, OH)*

The spirit touched a collapsing wall  
Pushing her eagle over the jagged edge

*(Carolyn Saxton, Frankfort, KY)*

Insanity of dangers, volumes torn, rewritten with a shattered pen:  
it's not right that children vanish.

*(Cindy Bousquet Harris, CA)*

Is it all slowly changing, forever lasting,  
and at the end of time, irrelevant?

*(James Shelnutt, Birmingham, AL)*

Shamefully, it takes too long to realize  
eternity is simply a man-made invention

*(Barbara A. Taylor, Mountain Top, Australia)*

all night storm—raindrops  
merging on my windowpane

*(Penny Harter, Mays Landing, NJ)*

The long walk begins again  
Where who and who and who and who form a multitude.

*(Lee Sharkey, Vienna, ME)*

White noise, what's in a crowd but a din?  
A million in a furrow, what days and lies unfurl, unshadow

*(Matthew Cooperman, Fort Collins, CO)*

but the child learns to speak anyhow, the child says  
*rabbit*. Rabbit? Is it going to be a good life?

*(Danielle Mitchell, Long Beach, CA)*

Fierce daughters/My womb still aching with the fact of you  
As stinging waves swept you to my wild shores

*(HeidiMarie Densmore, Woodstock, CT)*

Eyes filled with red blood vessels and glazed with tears  
Sweaty hands rub over the lids to no avail

*(Glenn Walton, Troy, NY)*

as in wipe clean or burn out? Of course true;  
that's what suns and planets of suns always do.

*(Fan Ogilvie, Vineyard Haven, MA)*

You go, but I stay here. In the rain, I smell the Chinese restaurant. The owner there  
smiles, sorts cash into a drawer and then makes change. He never rings in anything.

*(Carlen Arnett, Port Jefferson, NY)*

Winding a spool of yarn threads constance  
While unwinding a spool treads on chance.

*(M. Minford-Meas, Houston, TX)*

Nothing is strict, nothing straight, the weave is what we do  
from instinct out of what we are, what has woven us . . . .

*(Fred Johnston, Galway, Ireland)*

an instant in time, each thread, lying  
in thoughtless knowing under the naked light of stories

*(Robert C. Miller, Northfield, MN)*

Again we turn to Poetry, again  
we trust in words to make things new.

*(Mark Grinyer, Corona, CA)*

My left eye is aching to twitch or form  
a small resistance of tears against me.

*(Sagira Shahid, Northfield, MN)*

I ignore my parasitic twin's plea for force-  
meat shaped into a smooth-cheeked face.

*(Jennifer Kwon Dobbs, Saint Paul, MN)*

"Oh, that is how water flows!" exclaimed the composer  
and rushed back to the piano and corrected his river.

*(Burgi Zenhausern, Chevy Chase, MD)*

I saw that white keyed river, playing, by a dock full of laughing yellow boats. Then I thought of the  
underground day, when I noticed your gait, and now, how I love you so much.

*(T.E. Gourdeau, Newton, MA)*

Still the Monday bridges first unknow and then condone  
the flow of rivers. Foam crawls up their grimy pylons.

*(Ellen McGrath Smith, Pittsburgh, PA)*

Lost on the dirt road web of silence  
She finds her way home without a map

*(Janet Cannon, Redmond, WA)*

Drifting through her unsifted soul  
Berating her agony as a just a subject old

*(Ray A. Adams, Great Lakes, IL)*

Fires burn toward the city. I hold your hand; a pine ignites,  
spreads to another—path to where we live.

*(Kyle Laws, Pueblo, CO)*

The moon is half, has a smudge. We trudge uphill  
by a narrow beam. Everyone else is going down.

*(Kyle Laws, Pueblo, CO)*

rejoice in the rain, diamonds from the sky  
their drumming sounds like a soft lullaby

*(Robyn Corum, Hartselle, AL)*

therefore beat the drum and hand tighten the bolt  
indeed this spring brings an occupied revolt

*(Sean J. Mahoney, Santa Ana, CA)*

A thankful heart in golden years  
she stayed beside him through the years

*(Doreen Joy Graham, Calgary, Alberta, Canada)*  
She Walked by his side through battles of Life,  
War-torn and tattered she remained his wife.

*(J. Chambers Austin, Wernersville, PA)*  
in highs and lows  
of laughs and tears

*(Basil Rouskas, Long Valley, NJ)*  
A warm glow of Truth around them has shown,  
Together shared Peace few ever have known.

*(J. Chambers Austin, Wernersville, PA)*  
Content they have found their place in the sun,  
They see their sands pass as they quickly run . . .

*(J. Chambers Austin, Wernersville, PA)*  
Sun-cursed fields, wilted lilacs  
bequeath a finish line.

*(JC Sulzenko, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada)*  
The dawn wakes reality in our heads,  
as the racers begin their lines.

*(J. Chambers Austin, Wernersville, PA)*  
Gathered storm clouds precipitate  
summer showers as we consummate

*(John Reoli, New York, NY)*  
That breeze of sweet free air in the face of men must come to distant shores.  
But there is no peace in this world of ours, as long as we fight in wars . . .

*(Pat Sherman, Dover, OH)*

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