

I Write Poetry

When I think of how New Yorky this part of town is it reminds me how
New Yorky New York City is old lovers appear in my dreams as someone
new I once thought everyone I met was someone I'd known before a swath
of green crosses the street on the body of a stranger I'll never see again
few imagine his or her body alive with the electric energy of wonder

I saw W.S. Merwin read his poems on a stormy night on Oahu many years
ago afterwards an old man who said he was a farmer asked the famous poet
what he did *I write poetry* Merwin said *no* the man said *I mean what do you
do I write poetry* Merwin said I didn't wonder if he was rich or married well
or lying through his teeth *I write poetry* he said I fell into the wonder of awe

The Black Sheen

I say I'm a poet and all distinction falls away I smell deeply scented wood I see a white sweater platinum hair pulled tight a boxed wall-hanging slightly askew three people wearing glasses playing cards

I felt lightheaded describing the passion of my life my daughter said she thought I called her she was afraid I'd had another heart attack we are the most durable of beings we are the most fragile of beings

The black sheen of empty chairs nearby is a sign of my continuity in this life but neither black chairs nor the air around them accounts for this being here I speak myself back to the black sheen of being

I thought I might have misled myself in the faith of my aloneness when a woman held me my certainty was exposed as if the sun had been crossed by a cloud in my certain self there is no other to be missed but in this transient life uncertainty is my legacy

A woman embraced me and I began to miss what had seemed only absent before I've been brokenhearted in love and now I feel the pain in my broken body from the momentary touch of another this missing thing declares itself in my body and not the passion of my being

The Essential Occupation

I woke with the uncloudy vista of being alive it is the fullness of a heart open to itself Arthur Miller imagined his life a plateau where others' judgment would honor his awareness I speak from a place where I have merely reached the moment I have arrived to witness

The man who wails in prison brings down its walls upon himself the man who prays for release becomes a prisoner of his prayers Conrad Aiken applied as a conscientious objector on the grounds he was engaged in the essential occupation of writing poetry

Among those I know and don't know I see bone loneliness and dull fear but in magical thinking all my contraries were resolved by an intoxication of one sort or another the remaining poison in my brain is the residue of rejection brought forward from my ancestors to a cutting perfection

I'm a crippled man who learned to run with the pack certain I'd be left for carrion but despite this dark cause from which to extrapolate a life the spirit of poetry remains nothing corrupts the gift that survives the wounding and the scarring I speak of the recognition of love in the disappearance of the self and little of my broken life

Is it all of us who ignore the thorn for eternity's grace or is it all of us who go to war on scant evidence the azure blizzard of wanting to know everything there is to know drowns out the innocence but innocence returns remembering nothing of the storm

Every Beautiful Icon

Many times I have proposed a lover to emblemize my heart
when in the heart's reality there is no other I'm more alone
than alone there's no swimmer in the ocean no shore to swim
to no fish that slips its skin to become another lover to love

The more alone I become the deeper my world widens I'm alone
as the sea alone as the sky and when I put my feet on the ground
I'm not alone my companionship is unending in every step I take

When I sit back and luxuriate in aloneness I'm not alone and
then I'm less alone when I walk in the world Walt Whitman
knew it Emily Dickinson knew it this aloneness is the raw
meat of the poets and the oracle's cave of the soul

What if one accepts the loss of every beautiful icon in one's
life can a Christian love God without Jesus can a Buddhist love
Being without Buddha can a painter love beauty without a model
can a romantic fall in love without lust or desire can anyone love
without the ruse of love

Can I stay in love when love is inseparable from emptiness
can I keep love's wonders knowing that love and wonder are
done in their undoing can I live in this my undone being

Searching for Solace

My mother kept repeating toward the end of her long life that we were a *happy* family that each of us was *happy we were happy weren't we* she said searching for solace

The happiness she meant to cauterize to a permanent smile was close enough to the truth that it took me a lifetime to sort out the real from the show of reality

Beneath the facade of happiness was the simple salt of purest being and in my search for its reality I stripped away everything not true I found myself with nothing to wear and no one to wear it naked in the heart of happiness without a name for it

There's a moment of utter vulnerability with another or in art or in being itself that is the loss of control amid the controllable and the uncontrollable my quest has been to walk in surrender so close I no longer mistake its entry for the desire for it

I stand at the brink where surrender needs the wisdom of its origin more than it needs the charm of my desires I dance on the brink until naked and fearless I see the heart of surrender not its entrancing face and this language becomes coincidental

A Natural Vision

There's an open doorway and a light breeze with shadows in the glare of light with bodies faces voices music and the remembrance of play
Cezanne was quick to anger even quicker to be in a natural vision

The window is open to the windy street nature dances even in a coffee shop I spilled hot water on my hand from my mother's iron on the day of her memorial the skin peels away like sunburn

Wearing a frilly dress a girl pulls at her straps reads the paper drinks a latte desire is thought a prod and a spur to poetry but poetry populates desire like memory does to the empty past and the vacant future

This moment is unbroken whether her dress is on the floor or out the door no desire is necessary in this play no death interrupts the real the love I have sought from others is nowhere else to be found

I live in a rich man's house where time is like a buffet for everyone's use there's a ball game on the lawn books are scattered throughout the rooms it's as quiet as an arboretum or the cabin of a boat idling at sea

I forget how poor I am but my poverty wants me to believe this house is in someone else's name but it's my house I built this house this house was given to me

Shooting Crows

Babes in arms singles groups pairs working chatting sporting tattoos and jewelry under puffy felt wall-hangings everyone seems intent on some subject or none bright overcast sky 1930s band playing like a comic chorus a mother gives cookie pieces to her small boys piano blues from the 40s the barista has a blue pencil behind his ear

I don't know how to be a poet it's a mystery to me I never learned a way to write the spirit but I see with reversible eyeballs sometimes I catch the dark behind my eyes illuminated like a room where I sit in a loose community of others on a late Wednesday afternoon

Nighttime is a unifier the sun burns us apart not together artificial light doesn't compete for our separated souls the descending darkness embraces every one of us it coolly comforts and unites the heart in the blazing sun we seek the shade in the shade we let go of seeking care is creative in the stillness of the night

Watch any man turn into a blithering idiot to enjoy himself and then call it love I miss those days climbing the hills to shoot crows

There was a time when I knew very little and everything looked bigger I had heroes I jumped and shouted in their worship now I live alone and the echo is deafening sound runs away when you finally listen it makes hearing so alone and private it's outside yourself

This Endless Life

Some people smile no matter what a father and husband sits with his arms crossed his twinkling eyes in a look of pain his big smiling rawboned son finds a table for the three of them here in this cafe on the street that leads to the street that leads to other streets a happy family pokes about in a world of poking families

Everyone's wearing clothes they got up this morning and put on shoes and glasses and rings and watches and pens in their pockets grocery carts and back-packs and bags and then we turn gray or go bald in this endless life

1920s French music a nine-year-old guitarist sits in with the band my six-month-old glasses don't work as well as they did I pretend everyone is far away and there's smoke in the air

My friend who died was alive in this endless life not at this table she danced on a table of her choosing I loved her until she died my car pretended to die today it coughed and got better the mechanic and I laughed I drove here listening to the ball game on the radio this tabletop is cold and not strong enough for dancing this endless life

There are poems about death but none written in death poems there are about love but none written in love since love can't write and neither can death however love lost and the death of another are as common as fear and doubt

Love and death are not as self-revealing but nothing is lost love and death are alive in the absence of every thought alive even in the absence of every beautiful poem this endless life

No More Goddesses

A card player in a red bowling shirt Ace of Spades on the back
Cezanne said *when you paint goddesses you cease to paint women*

I want a room with an open floor above a café where I can awake walk
the floor and come down for a cup of coffee I went to the street and
looked back to see if my dream was here but this is a single-story
building regardless in this moment I live where I dream in a café
below my home above Cezanne worked standing up

Open as the door the window the book the face of the sandwich
the cut on my finger in this café my expectations are not clouded
by experience here there's no future bound to a past and here
the present sits by the open door

My mother died and for weeks I saw no sign of its blossom or its
decay I saw it settle in me a kind of fertility like water in the cracks
my orphanage stretches across time but that old building crumbled
and from its foundation I see across her greening

In the closeness of blood the closeness is sacrosanct but when someone
of blood dies something of the sacrosanct dies with them one becomes
less bound to the center disintegration begins to appear

If I spend months painting her portrait does the depth of concentration
reveal its subject or is she known and shown in the quick glimpse of
a brush stroke do we lose the honor of our intentions in the speed
of living and dying or is all speed the same when all of existence
comes present in a moment and a life is gone just that soon

Feeling Around for Wonders

If you live among people even barely some think you have accomplished something it is the ambition of foundlings the gentle raucous party music gives way to a ballad of lost love lost gloves love left out on the table at night and found again in the morning

The light from the street unites us all in a common glow but the dogs passing by prefer to smell the world like fingers in a barrel of surprises I read Van Gogh and my empathy is as easy as sunlight falling on a sunflower I'm as intimate as he was with loves and lovers

In this day and night café suffering is no more my plight than it was his we fall from love not into it a disabled boy hugs his father's neck in the complicity of their flesh his red head rises and falls he lies at peace

In this long and narrow café a rising sense comforts me there was sunshine yesterday and the rain today instead of being its dreary usurper is the sun's close companion I hug my father until he hugs me we love each other long past his dying

I read the Haight Ashbury Literary Journal and recall the sense of poets talking to each other within earshot of anyone interested being serious jumping leaping having fun with truth being true to our common lies

The subject of each poem is an easy self that's happy to speak for the speaker or anyone passing the page on their way to somewhere else such complicity is refreshing here in this distant city of private isolation it reminds me of the joys of the solitary life lived among friends

The Journal opens wide like a newspaper and all the news that throws a fit it prints its voices turn inward as here the room turns quiet and each of us goes wherever we go when the room is safe

Living in Love's Trajectory

I sit still between imagining the love of my life and knowing love itself
between anticipation and acceptance I sit still in mystery and wonder

It's not my desire to be sad but I have been and I didn't notice it until
it stopped when I came here what a disaster of history the end of an era
that went largely unnoticed until it was over the past is reflected upon
when the present lets go of its old self

The problem with going out every night expecting to make love
to someone even with a long string of successes or because of it
one misses the opportunity to have no idea what constitutes love

One never learns to distinguish love from love's familiar face to look
into the face of the unknown and find the recognition of love looking
back to know love without any history of it occurring without having
to spend one's time trying to find it among its approximations

I've written love poems in recognition of the love that's found in the
absence of love's object and if that were perfectly true I'd be done with
poems written in love's trajectory but that is where I have been living

Born in the heart of love I've lived in love's trajectory and I know as an
archer knows that arrows are not his love and neither are their targets

What if love is motionless what if desire doesn't seek out love but
leaves love behind what if love is motionless and the only way to
find it is to be still with no desire to seek it what if love exists in
the effortless quiet of my being what then my poetic soul

Another Time in Eternity

Father and daughter stand in line in Mesopotamia two thousand years before the Christian Era the girl holds a doll on a string her father guides her forward his hands on her small shoulders

As they near the front the music changes the father begins a gentle shuffling dance and the girl smiles at her wonderful life

In the depth of field called this café people occupy parts of the air with their vital presence imagine I'm showing you what I feel in my being here imagine this room as a painting filled with pigmented time

Inside the shock and wonder at the presence of life every face evokes a persona we call by a name we give these faces no more thought than animated clothing or we treat them with fear and desire but here in this thick painted air this division of eternity is this uncommon place of time

Can I tell you what it means to me in particular to be in a place where I feel welcome not in doing or being anyone but because water can't kick water out of itself even when that might seem true everywhere or even here at another time in eternity

The Truth About Love

Everyone seems to be up front watching the musicians play their music
or the music play its musicians a wistful anticipation takes up the clarinet
a stern talking to blows the trumpet a golden invitation fingers the guitar
a sharp salute thumbs the bass and a quiet bliss wanders the room

I could neglect this simple life for a complicated imagination but beneath
the imagined complexity is a life as full as the one I see before me without
its vexing complications a man in a beret coat scarf and gloves eyes the list
of photographs that line the walls then he and his short-haired wife leave
the café like photos in motion like still-lives that walked off the wall

In any other café poetry stands on the corner with its thumb out it's not
that I can't write a poem anywhere else but like any true love this café has
spoiled my desire to lie with anyone else in service of the truth about love

I spoke in adult sentences before I was three and having got that out of
the way I attended to the garble of gods then to sheets of melodic noise
then to incoherent dogs barking then to unaccented stillness then I
wondered why a silent child was so intent on vocabulary

A boy in a Basquiat T-shirt buys a piece of cake for his mother a bottle of
water for himself he stops at a table of pretty girls they talk about college
next to a table of cross-dressers one loud one pretty one not so pretty

Drawn to a certain woman here in this café I imagine my hands on her
hips in her silky dress this is the way the world forms and disintegrates
all my sentences fracture when thought turns toward its origin all my
desires and fears are absorbed in the sound of their original music

The Sudden Appearance of Awkwardness

Creole gypsy jazz rumbles swings bounces croons guitars fiddle bass
and snare people move their chairs like gusts of wind in a weeping willow
Sad Willy wanders in and can't find sorrow anywhere the fiddler saws his
music in half the drummer Fred Astaires his skins the bass player grins
people say *I love you* when the music in them calls out its own name

I stood stiffly at the counter and forgot which skin I was wearing
the best answer is no skin the sudden appearance of awkwardness
is like a forecast of fresh snow to an eager skier

There's scrambling before a concert not in the band or the audience
but the desire to form chords on short notice deifies their nakedness
when we're undressed well we're dressed up even better

When I drank there were no awkward moments now I see the guitarist's
bobbing foot and a gap opens in my equanimity my lungs expand my heart
beats with high-steppin' moves I fill myself outward from emptiness

My awkwardness doesn't portend welcome but acceptance appears
in its place two sisters split my view of the band two old guys in dresses
pass nonchalantly their cavalier masculinity no barrier to the music

This poem is like the label on a bottle of rum words on paper that
camouflage the camouflage like nudity and costumery do to the body
spontaneous joy is contagious like the smell of bread joyful music
spills out of the air it gets on everyone something grabs each person
like a strong grip on a tube of dough squeezes out a birthday cake

Here comes Boston Charley his hat pulled down whistling like
singing *it feels too natural to be in love with this many people*

Two straight women dance their breasts lock as they pirouette violin
music climbs the wall like fast moving ivy never toss a poem away
until you're done with it like shedding clothes on a busy dance floor

The Celebration of Our Passing Days

No better than instinct the erratic blood of my heart takes aim
at the air from every pore it attempts to break free of the skin

I pluck words by an imprecise knowledge from the din and if I
don't listen I can't hear the silence that gives language its blood

A woman with large ears and her hair pulled back rubs her eyes
she looks kindly at her boyish companion heterosexuals get along
better when there are homosexuals around like a buffer and a guide

A girl's T-shirt reads *Pleasure Victim* she seems less victim than
participant what if Gutenberg's press had not been for printing
Bibles but the celebration of our passing days a famous painter
has gotten rich putting paint on the surface of his charming and
homey mass-marketed prints *it makes them come alive* he says

I wonder about these things until I fall into the unprinted
moment and my unpainted eyes open like sunburnt dew

The Cool Breeze in the Warm Night Air

I grabbed my soccer boots and headed down to Memorial Stadium for a Monday Night game but no one showed up the schedule said the game was next week I found two sealed bottles of non-fat chai on the sidewalk in front of the PBS station I thought about the effect my ibuprofen might have on an unexercised body

Tonight the cool breeze wafts in through the open door like a tall thin blond sitting in with the band back when the guitar was not a solo instrument it was played like a brace of silver-shod horses climbing the flights of a long velvet staircase in the rain but that was before the effects of ibuprofen were well-known

The music moves up and down the street it pulls people out of doors to see who strides so gainfully in such a poor district everyone feels prosperous in the rain of musical banknotes a boy runs in the road into the open arms of a rich life ahead of him because musicians leave their wealth behind wherever they go

Have you ever been an artist's model I thought to ask a woman instead I ask myself *am I ready to repopulate beauty with reality am I ready to draw the line that reunites form with the invisible am I ready to engage in the presence of absence that undefines art*

Am I ready to hold up my end of the bargain I strike in the asking am I ready to lift the brush of my answer the warm night air occupies the room like light the light occupies the room like warm night air

The Center for Wooden Boats

I went to a birthday gathering at the Center for Wooden Boats
it was a party Bob was throwing for his girlfriend Dawn it was
my job to feel the alienation Bob felt among his new relatives
I talked to a banker about his retirement and a young couple
about their baby and then I left I picked up my coat and I left

I wandered the pier looking at the boats and then I drove away
I couldn't stay I left my discomfort in the air and I drove away
there are courtesies for disarming such a situation but I chose not
to engage them I walked up the ramp and I unlocked my truck
I got in I put my seatbelt on and I drove away when I could've
made my goodbyes shaken hands and bowed out gracefully
instead I entered the traffic and I came to where I feel at ease

A barista asked what was up and when I told her she said *I'm
glad to hear I'm not the only one who does that* I said *I'd rather
be here than there so here I am* this is the way prose becomes
poetic to save itself from unrelieved and unspoken despair

When The Carter Family sang there was a melancholy embrace
a sweet majesty a cry that rose above the relentless loss a song
of the soul that holds the defeated heart in its comforting hands
the Carters' high lament cast a thin nearly invisible thread upon
the wind when the light caught it you could nearly go blind

*I was standing by the window on one cold and cloudy day
when I saw the hearse come rolling for to carry my mother away*

*Keep on the sunny side always on the sunny side keep on
the sunny side of life it will brighten every day it will help
you on your way if you keep on the sunny side of life*

The Sunbaked Dust

Scrabble players compete under cartoony paintings
the barista offers me free coffee *you're a grandpa* he says

My daughter had a daughter who might be called Ava if the name suits her
I went to the hospital when my daughter was halfway in labor *I'm tired* she
said *we've been working hard* including her husband and the labor coach

It felt like a cult of the unborn a dark cell of baby conjurers I kissed my
daughter hugged my son-in-law shook hands with the counselor and left

I had stormed the citadel of life and my son envied me my stolen minutes
in the inner sanctum we've both been spun off from an ancient story and
love is no part of it we are spinning tops glancing circles of collision and
separation until the swirling winds die down in the sunbaked dust of time

To carry a poet's mind or an artist's eye is simply to hold to a simple way
longer than expected the back wall of the building across the street is a
Hundertwasser of sunbleached brick to be an artist is to sit in the peace
of perception that's youthful or scorned or free or all three

A part of the wall is for sale as a print in a frame and here's the original
paintless and priceless look at the way the colors climb around that window

I Sit in the Company Of

Was I looking at sadness or wariness the same as mine this
is a belt-buckle street there's marrow in the bone I drift into
thoughtlessness I sink into the deep pond colors of cold tea

In this long narrow room figures move its length they cross it
they step in and out of it like a pathway like being seen through
one eye where mundanity is telescoped to a drama of serenity

A small dark woman sits low in the back corner her eyes engage
at a distance equal to her inner reflection I suspect her wariness
is not weary but watchful a careful protection of the bloom
in the bud and I think to myself *I sit in the company of*

I'm recognizable by the company I keep like motion in stillness like
a dog at the opera like colors in the water like *here* in what seemed
like *there* for the longest time I'm here by the company I keep

On the wall are paintings of war these walls have come around
again these are times that reveal the tender and texture of our base
and finer nature what is the voice buried in our chatter what is vital
in our vitality is there deep blue in a sky without darkness

It's been hot for weeks a smiling dog is a dog with its mouth open
pet the dog's head his ears go back not necessarily a sign of malice

I thought I'd grow old happily at sea in being itself but once in a while
a stranger will walk up to you on the street and hand you a million dollars
only a suspicious mind would complain about the weight of the money
and the pinch of the string-tied bundle I have a suspicious mind

Don't think I'm in love with you because you too are open to being
in love I'm in love with the being we're both inside we're walking in
the blood of our ancestors none of us is alone I am not your lover

How to Write a Book of Poems

First make a list of subject matter wait a second did I say subject matter like brain matter the stuff forensic scientists scrape off walls to find out who got killed skip the list you don't have a list in fact you've got nothing good luck to you

On this muggy day I played soccer I got my meds I shopped at Goodwill I heard two black guys in their 50s talk about their age *a couple of youngsters* I said and they laughed *you don't look that old* one said but no matter how well I'm doing it's a losing battle

If you act like an old man the young bucks will treat you with sweet condescension if you compete with them and you don't do well they will drive you to the back of the herd if you compete as an equal they will welcome you back into belonging in our cherished camaraderie

Everyone longs to be part of the game even if the game is illusory and impermanent I'll play until I step aside it was Senior Day at Goodwill there are benefits to aging I saved 15% on two frames and a blue shirt

It must be Beautiful Woman Day in the café like going to the movies in real life everywhere I look delight comes out to play the place is full of handsome men too it must be Beautiful Man Day my heart stays out for everyone it must be Beautiful Heart Day in the café

There are shards of light on every surface three guitarists with their heads down churn the sort of sound one can take for background or one can take for a ride in the resonating chamber of your heart

Three hanging lamps sway like on a ship at sea the steady room is drunk on an ocean of delight and the ship's orchestra is playing *nearer my god to thee Anna Lee*

The Ways of Grace

A girl sits with her mother and her mother's boyfriend in the center of the café like the middle of a dance floor acting unnaturally natural they circle a separation looking for a blessing from some image they might all love the compact sealed if one of them says the right thing

The mother gets up to look at the art on the walls the girl tries to put the man at ease he pinches her nose then the woman touches his back the man is the girl's father I realize I've invented the play of the scene

Grace escapes me until I see and say that grace escapes me then I see it here where it's always been two guitarists play on the sidewalk one good the other idiosyncratic the good one upsets the apple-cart the other one puts mittens on the apples a dirty window makes life seem darker Thomas Hardy said the sun mocks man but Hardy never played guitar on the sidewalk on a warm August afternoon

I thought it might be good to write my last love asking why we weren't still together I stopped when I thought to say *you never seemed happy*

I come to the café looking for the magic lover like a heart-torn agnostic looking for his god but the difference is I know I won't find what I'm looking for one doesn't pray to gain god's attention one prays to get one's attention on god

She Caught the Katy

I feel at peace when I flirt with a certain barista I come alive when I find a ground for my spirit so why doesn't my spirit do that of its own accord I feel good when I say *she caught the Katy and left me a mule to ride* but if it mattered it wouldn't feel the same

My life is a form born from the genetic millennia but this morning I saw its play from the place of no place not in the detailed shape of my life but as the seer not the one who sees but seeing itself

Another woman suggested we see a singer I like and as she said it I began thinking in advance so I said no and felt better immediately

No one's been able to describe this but don't stop trying I was told it's become the pleasure of my purpose to tell the inexpressible in the way my self acts itself out I am spirit and I am its witness

My mind is capable of lists of greater and lesser importance but my favorite band is playing can you hear the syncopated guitars the accordion and base a romantic opportunity I didn't want caught the Katy and left me one of my favorite mules to ride

What shows itself to my mortal self is a moment of leaping out of myself without leaving myself behind this is not a model of distance it's not a spiritual or mental exercise it's not part of a splintered personality it is the being that has no parts in whom I live my life

I am a fish in the sea I am the sea I am water I am a man in a café writing poems out of the whole cloth of heaven and earth

A Matter of Trust

On my way to a Van Gogh exhibit I saw that if I waited an hour parking was free but it felt like the time was right earlier I went to the dentist to fix a broken tooth I trust my dentist as much as Van Gogh last night I saw a Julia Roberts movie I trust her too

I spoke to friends about my desire to return to India I trust India as much as one can trust a place today I trusted Van Gogh best

People stand in front of a painting looking for something it's an old habit *there's a stranger in town what's he want* take away the need for belonging and everything seeks its own level I walked up close to a dozen paintings most others kept a respectful distance but Vincent painted intimacy intimately he stood close to the canvas

I thought about lingering but how long does it take to see with an open heart any longer I might have started counting brush strokes

My son says he's living a parallel experience it's reassuring to both of us he says he's better able to live his best life outside relationship it's the same realization I had and we haven't talked for a while

I drew a moustache on the self-portrait at the Van Gogh exhibit nobody seemed to notice when I bought a postcard of the same painting in the museum bookstore I saw it too had a moustache

I sent the postcard to a painter friend in New Mexico I told her the truth about Van Gogh's effect on me and mine on him my son is much taller than I am and younger by a generation

The Indescribable Café

If I try to describe the indescribable what will happen to poems
about the café and the woman behind the counter if you've never
heard of Ray Charles you might simply hear a man singing

Unfamiliar with the music you might hear the voice in your own body
resounding in someone else's register a poet leans close to another
poet next to a third poet who is writing a poem about the other two

It's clear one of them is a poet but in the making of his poem he forgets
what he is no poet exists but in his existence call him a poet if you like

My café muse lives here I look at her and my imagination makes love
but I'm content to be apart while my heart opens to the heart of itself

I could become intimate in all the ways I can but I love the love this
love affords me but I'm ready to love something that's not always true
that might be false she say she feels hot she says she's going to die I say
it's because all the pretty girls have gone home and left her here alone

I've written in the presence of love and love appeared in poem and person
by the presence of love is love written and all the pictures fall off the wall
no one makes love but love is the maker and love's absence seems to be
the unmaker a man's hat sits on his head bottles of soda sit on the shelf

My eyes fill the room as a baby's eyes embrace the world I see the spirit
in the room I see the not quite recognizable stunning face of life itself

Sun soaks the landscape I dance alone my shoulders back I don't want
to hurry out of this noon with the sun at its peak circling the hours

I sing for the sun in undiluted rays I kiss the sun of my daylight wonder
it's been noon for half the day I don't need to be in love to be in love