

A Mind That Won't Quit

A mind that won't quit,
knows to quit the mind.

It does no good
to a yelping dog,
to say good dog,
be quiet now.

Be quiet
for the dog.

When the mind calms,
it's time to say,

*Good dog,
good mind.*

I Am Still

I am still,

A relief
to the mind

That cannot find
its own relief

In its own
actions.

At Home

At home
in stillness,

My return
to others,

Becomes
another kind
of homecoming,

Life reuniting
with itself.

What Gives Life

What gives life
to my peacock self,

Such a nasty bird,

Is not its plumage,
but its heart,

As pure as a
swan's heart,

The swan, also
a nasty bird.

At the Golden Gate

At the Golden Gate,
few jump out
to sea,

Almost all
jump back
toward this life,

In their death poems,
Zen monks speak some
sort of instruction,

Or they pull
their words in
after them.

Líars Even Lía

Líars even lie
to themselves,

I almost believe
I came from somewhere,
and will, to somewhere go,

Or I drive a bread truck forever. *

** Bread = thoughts and feelings,
Truck = a body that moves,
Drive = holding the wheel,
I = always here.*

Many Back Away

Many back away
from their fire,

Like standing
at the mouth
of a volcano,

Dying by fire
doesn't leave much
of the old life behind,

Maybe the shoes.

I Have Lived Alone

I have lived alone,
unthreatened

By the idea
of the other,

And then I met
someone,

This new cause
for definition
evaporates,

In the thick, sweet air,
where she is free,

To appear and
disappear.

I Fail to Paint

I fail to paint
a true picture
of who I am,

Before birth,
and after death,

A self-portrait
of the one I have
always known
to be.

A Father's Eyes

A father's eyes,
clouded with history,

He thinks of
nothing but himself
in everything he sees,

A son's eyes,
open to life,

He suddenly
thinks only
of himself,

And his eyes
hide in full sight
of the world.

Those Who Live

Those who live
in one place,
live among
the dead,

Those who
move about,
carry the dead
with them,

Grief,
without
a ground
beneath it,

Is easy to
imagine gone,
and hard to
leave behind.

One About to Die

One who is about to die,
may make impassioned pleas,

In fiery rage and torn clothing,
for peace and acceptance,

After constructing
a life-long career
of their avoidance.

Forgive Me

Forgive me
for sounding
like a translation
of this day or
any other,

Everything
would seem
to be too much,

Without the grace
of our near constant
translation
of who we are.

I Don't Know

I don't know
which one of us

Is different
from the other,

But I wouldn't
bet on it.

I Say "I"

I say "I"
to friends and others
in cafés and Congress,

No one calls me on my lie.

"I" keeps itself alive,
by speaking its name.

What is the secret?
There is no secret.

Go Slow

Go slow,
slow down,
stop,

Now I'm getting
somewhere.

All This Talk

All this talk,
very entertaining,

Even the word *silence*,
what a show!

*OK, everyone was an
all-star in high school,*

A man falls out of his chair,
to the floor below,

Now, you try it.

Everywhere

Everywhere
light goes looking,

It cannot
find the dark,

It Takes

It takes
only a little fear,

To stay away
from this being here.

We Are the Same

We are the same,

This is the only
definition of love,

That doesn't lie,
just a little.

My Poetry

My poetry
is other than I am,

Or else
it's the same,

What swimmer,
what drowning man,
can tell the difference,

Between water
and the lake,
where he swims
and dies?

I Have Come

I have come
looking for you,

Out here,
where you

Forgot to say
you'd meet me.

A Dying Monk's Final Words

A dying monk's final words were,
Look at me... all dying and stuff.

His disciples were confused,
so he continued to live, there was
still work to be done.

Then he died for certain,
and this time he said,
This dying sucks,

His disciples cheered,

I made that up, there was
no moon that night.

Contemplating

Contemplating
something of beauty,

I come to know
something
of beauty itself,

Am I not now
made beautiful?