

The Famous Death of a Firefly (Zenku from other Writing)

At the corner,
all he waits for is
the direction he's going.

Some people are on
the street as if they just
wandered in off the street.

He pinch-grips his cigarette,
the wing of a poisonous
butterfly.

He sweeps debris onto
the street below, table
scraps onto the floor.

She turns, looks, with the slight
of almost seeing the object
of her scorn.

Young girl, with tiny silver
fork earrings, steps on her
friend's foot, and grins.

Arboretum cat rubs
against Mahoberberis
Myethkeana.

Like you'd imagine
it to be, a building,
in every detail.

Tourists pose, he squats
to be the picture, she squats
to take it, they rise.

Witness to war, day and night,
Long tells Dewey, "Destroy
the Spanish Fleet."

A newspaper lies on
the steps, a large
leaf of legible lettuce.

Ducks and geese on
the pond, a floor, with
all the properties of water.

A green hose snake,
lies on the grass,
perspiring violently.

She looks up and down
the streetcar, like scanning
bad fruit and vegetables.

Blue ladies sit down
in unison, cross their
legs into the bargain.

She says she'll cut his
hair, foams a little at the
corner of her mouth.

A clean gray margin of
fog, above the turbulent
blue page of sea.

Old Chinese, holding a silver
cane, his face, swept
clean of adornment.

Ocean seagull, lying against
the wind, small hand from
a speeding car.

Traffic crush, a Niagara
of boulders, no barrel
would stand a chance.

Streetcar, silent readers,
nothing-doers, restless
eyes run face to face.

A battered hat comes off,
goes down between the
knees, becomes his income.

High window, a potted
plant leans to the sun,
man in a t-shirt.

A couple embraces
beside the road, beside
their car, at the lake.

She reads the horoscope,
genuflects at each church
the streetcar passes.

Feather on the crosswalk,
lifted by wheel breezes,
car lights jumping.

Cars, on the quick drive
home, small rooms to die in,
the streets are full of cars.

He looks kicked out, downturned
face, cake box, smoky vase,
one paper flower.

Street lamp glows in the
barroom doorway, picture
frame of the narrow street.

A cigarette hits the
pavement, the famous
death of a firefly.

Blind man, against a marble
panel, holds his hat, waist
high, with both hands.

Base runner at the ocean,
slides into home, throws
the ball out to sea.

Rumbling streetcar, young
man nods off, his lips pink
with cheap wine residue.

At the pier, mother and son
dip fries in ketchup, father
and son split fish heads.

Man throws the ripples
of his soles across the
asphalt, behind his feet.

Lone barber sits, cross-
legged in his chair, reading
day-old newspapers.

Distraught man, hunched over,
waves end in a gentle wash
small boys play in.

A fat, red robin plucks berries
to its throat, quick fingers
to the hors d'oeuvres.

Wine merchant carries
empty gallons to his truck,
glass skulls on a string.

Gold, on his chest, fast
asleep, on the red aurora
of his jacket.

Welfare line, waiting in
bunches, each new flower
adds to the bouquet.

Cappuccino overflows
the cup, cigarette
soaks in the saucer.

On the bus, the only
conversations, in Chinese,
sound familiar.

Boy holds his transfer
like an unhappy message,
home from the teacher.

Jack-hammer, next
to the curb, a giant,
battery-powered nail file.

Man, downtown, passing
out poetry, woman,
passing out cigarettes.

Here's the old puppet
man, crossing the street
with his bag of tricks.

Green hedge, red head
bobbing, gutter ball
in a bushy bowling alley.

Curved pier, a tour j'eté,
against the velvet curtain
of the bay.

Taxi stand, yellow fish
consumes morsels through
a vent in its right side.

Woman at the bus stop,
two slender vases support
a month's laundry.

Library patrons slip past
guards, bold as thieves, with
their books in their heads.

Five old men sit, wearing hats,
old women, in kerchiefs,
wind in the trees.

Words, flowing in the street,
the grimy, running, squatting
words, the children.

Poem, train on a track,
slower on the highway,
sitting on a rock.

He's without his pants,
I hope this helps, she said
and tossed them in the road.

A fire in my house, flames
in my doorway? It licks,
it laps, she burns.

In France, spilling wine, paint,
Miller's wife showed him two
tickets for the States.

She's a tiny dot on the
map and yet things are
going on down there.

Trees rush by, running
like watercolor, desire
flies to my throat.

End of the day, I go home,
I go home, I go home,
I go homeat.

A picket fence around
your love, my eagerness,
stuck between the slats.

Bee-Bop Bees bop and buzz,
their new dance means extra
honey for the hive.

Poetry/love, simple,
you turn the house on
its side, people adjust.

Anatomy, each of us,
a fleshy blue boat, made
from airplane parts

Eagle, a noise in my ears,
a small moving thing on
the ground below.

Eyes closed, I plant
myself, a leg kicks out
a root in the cool mind.

All night long, I listen to
the radio, the sound of the
sea, rising up from below.

Beaten down, I'm drunk on
the difference between
that and who I am.

Fish jump out of the sea,
sunlight sings in the sky,
birds fly, shore to shore.

Images flood the floor,
lap the walls, I drink and
drown for a poem.

Alone, I walked to school,
the others, running on
paths, behind the trees.

Dedalus explains the death
of son Icarus, a drowning
at sea.

I go away, come back,
I go away, come back,
the pear ripens.

I catch my finest thoughts
in brief moments, awaiting
their swift return.

A glass, the rain, windows,
loud music, leaping into
the room, shouting.

Muscle cells, tissue cells,
neural cells, everything
sells but poetry.

I wandered mindlessly
into this den of lack
of iniquity.

Yes, choose a profession,
but not prophet and seer,
shaman you, my son.

My heart was a fish
at sea, life inland has
put legs on its wisdom.

Lying down, drips from
the cup, slip warmly
into my favorite shirt.

When wise ones see
a glass half full, they say,
Look how it holds that water.

At last, the seeker says
to himself, now you can
begin without me.

I went to prison, then
to a drive-in for lunch.
What next, I wonder.

Before freedom,
chop wood, carry water,
after freedom, still busy.

Feeling depressed, while
singing n the rain, I don't
neglect the rain.

I cheer, shout, I weep.
In my heart, even defeat
tastes like victory.

Nature poet, in the city,
I still catch my breath,
still see the moon.

No talking to myself,
now I listen. Now, no
one calls me crazy.

Pointing to the moon,
the moon fades, I point
to the hometown of the moon.

Day after day, year in,
year out, rollercoasters
on the volcano.

I raise flowers to arrest
the sun, I raise a candle
to the light.

I point to the moon, my
finger's shadow crosses
the face of the earth.

The chirping of the
crickets plays havoc with
the croaking of the frogs.

Soles sink, grain by grain, weight
reshapes the sand beneath these
hard-heeled feet.

Waiting for someone, I hear
the lapping of the water
at the shore.

I feel my heart go through
my ribs to embrace your
heart, come out to meet it.

Accepting aloneness,
the vast meadow of love
opens, once again.

I move about, invisible as
a jackdaw in a shoebox,
some might call it murder.

I know how lonely
it can get, in the night,
after the howling's done.

He saw her, and he wasn't
afraid. He saw the forest
of her trees.

I lay on the sandy beach
long enough to be one
with the island.

He said, great people act
like great people, never
knowing if they're right.

In her eyes, she paints
it all, made conscious of
her least conscious passion.

I am as tired as any
old metaphor that you
might think of.

It isn't being nice that
pleases the cat, but
gladness in your heart.

God speaks through
the hollow in a stone wall
in the middle of nowhere.

He accused her of weeping,
he took it back, she forgave
him, he wept.

I asked to hear the secret
to long life, the answer came,
Don't hold your breath.

There seems a time, in my
ancient memory, when war
went unanswered.

When spirit leaves my
flesh, I invite it back, for
the good of my heart.

Poetry is the wordless,
spoken to our even
more silent heart.

An eagle rose from the
singer's throat and spread
its wings across the sky.

We march to the beat
of a tin drum in the
hands of a small child.

I've lost it all, he cried,
as his heart began to
reshape the world.

Courage puts away the
steely heart at the risk
of one's uniform.

The world is a vale of
tears, the same world's
a vale of laughter.

Part of the art, part
of the artist, caught in
their own loving embrace,

Light grows louder,
drowning out color, that
shown brightly, moments before.

A flower said to one
who adored it, You
never let me love you.

Creation is love
of life recreating
itself as love itself.

I'm born, flourish, die,
in a life of wonder,
in the blink of an eye.

I'm startled back into
the commonplace,
tasting my own saliva.

In all innocence and
without guilt, I spilled
coffee on the Buddha.

Toss my bones in a barrel
of tears, I'm done with
bones, barrels, and tears.

I look under rocks, I search
the skies, I see no tears,
I hear no cries.

This living hand, lies on
a battlefield, a book,
a bed of leaves.

In bitter cold, the windows
rattle, the fire crackles,
the heart beats.

Picking up his tools, the work
begins, putting down his tools,
the work's done.

Barista, new to the task,
the line, long and slow,
then the sun comes out.

What drowning man
searches the difference
between water and the sea?

Coming home from the grave,
going home from the grave,
apple blossoms fall.

A peaceful mind searches
for no needle in a stack
of no needles.

Zen, too many words,
Haiku, too much form,
no poem but poetry.

Her smile holds the
tender hope of being
safe in unsafe being.

Here and there, one finds
a poem among the shaved
and shattered timbers.

No poet has saved Bambi,
writing odes to the glory
of nature.

Life's a beam of light,
cast against adobe walls
from a speeding car.

Madly driving, pell-mell,
down narrow streets, see
the world, read my heart.

My slight grip on
the fragile vase of life
terrifies my eager grasp.

To hold a thing, when
my fingers fail, is close
to the fearsome truth.

To be one who
listens to the silence
of the desire to speak.

Old man, his eyes
betray him, they dance,
a divine disability.

At the beach, she slowly
turns toward me, turned
back. by the incoming tide.

I see the foam on
the sand, once a wave,
ignore its airy presence,

In something, on the verge
of nothing, I care, when
my hands have no hold.

The sky and the sea
and the shore fade
into their similitude.

Can I say I saw it
happen, when I say
I saw it in myself?

Stepping, to the corner,
a few steps on sand,
then, the eastern ocean.

Walking in town, on the
street, above the ground,
facsimile of earth.

Oceanside, the unfathomable
deep, across the road
from rented rooms

So many shoes, lost in
the ocean, legless fish
wonder in wild song.

Gaggle of geese gather the
calm, float, dip, rise, spread
their wings, skim the pond.

Ruffled white swan,
Cleopatra's barge, black swan,
slow, regal, swims apart.

Hawks, geese, swans,
down from trails in the sky,
followed close by human eyes.

Mafioso poses, in style
only, dragging fries
through the cheese.

Old ones masquerading
as their younger selves,
half-believing the ruse.

Sailboat, atop the sea,
cannot swim, cannot fly,
does the in-between.

I see sights, once from afar,
up close, here where I am,
the same as they are.

The stream foams through
rocks into the pool it obscures
by its turbulence.

I slow myself, enough,
to bring motion into peace,
that they might match.

This solitude invites
the world, watches it
pass, welcomes it home.

Leaves, big as a catcher's
mitt, catch sun, catch rain,
catch the eye, none for long.

Walking the road, among
the trees of the earth,
this quiet, constant crowd.

The sky is endless blue,
a thin stem of green climbs
through the floorboards.