"Poems are not the point.
Finding again the world,
That is the point,
Where loveliness is adorned by
intelligible things
Because the mind's eye lit the sun!"

Howard Nemerov
I
into the ornamental-concrete gardens go I;
kicking all the marble shins
picking all the marble noses
feeling all the marble breasts;
I suppose it would turn me on if I were a statue

II
I wish I were.

I would love to sit on someone's lawn
like a plaster nigger holding out my chipped top hat
And wait for some Jew to come feeling
To see if I had hidden any quarters on me.

III
When my paint would shale,
I would be peeled to the world,
And would have to try to stand boldly up to dogs
Who would want to leak on me.

IV
It must be tough to be a statue.

But you see only the same scenery, day after day,
Through stony and pupilless eyes.

John Mucci
Full and fat and sleepy
warm in their cloaks of uncombed wool
restlessly milling about the canvass cathedral,
the worship place,
eyeing each other's wives and
saying the same thing
over and over again;
Walking aimlessly
eyes on the ground
picking their way among rusted tins of
Red Man tobacco
and sweet-smelling bottles of amber
peach brandy
and accompanied by
tinny bells and
a throaty chorus of one-word hymns,
they sing their hosannas, and
god knows
they shall not want.
(But I have seen god
he is an old mexican-apache
with brandy on his breath.
and when he smiles
he has no teeth.)

Roger Beatty

wings
please i interrupted-
wings for my birthday
(sprayed gold and scalloped
i would stand tense and serious
in the gravel driveway
ready to fly)

my father always said next year
(i would stand
in the gravel driveway
ready to fly)
From the deck of a ship

Poseidon whispers at me.

His white fingers reach up to me,

Receding into churned green milk.

He ripples his strength at me,

Arching his body proudly,

Then diving away into swirls and patterns

Of liquid sapphire.

Poseidon watches me through clandestine eyes.

He twinkles on the sun-water

Then recoils into the crystalline blue dimensions.

His ancient molded beard

Floats over the sea,

And sweeps the fish creatures away.

Poseidon whispers at me-

And I feel his steady heartbeat against the world.

Carla Weiss
"We shall study the chain of life today. Take your science books out and open them to page 247."

There was a sigh and a grumble and the fifth grade class took their science books out of their desks.

"The chain of life is a food chain. This means that each animal in the chain feeds on a smaller animal. Michael, stop drawing in your book. The food chain starts with a very small animal called a plankton. The plankton gets its food from the energy of the sun. Mary, turn around. Then, a tiny fish eats the plankton. Then, a medium-sized fish eats the tiny--Peter stop kicking Kathy--eats the tiny fish. Then, a big fish eats the medium sized fish. THEN, a fisherman catches the big fish and it gets sent to the store where we buy it and take it home to eat. So you see, if there were--Dick, can't you wait if there were no plankton, we wouldn't be able to eat because the little fishies would die, so the medium
sized fish couldn't eat, and so on down the line to us."

"What does the earth eat?" demanded Peter.

"Don't be funny, Peter, the earth doesn't eat and you know it." The teacher turned to the blackboard.

"Now, class, you will answer questions 1-6 in the back of the book for homework."

Suddenly, there was a great grumbling noise.

A tiny crack in the linoleum opened wide and a great set of teeth emerged. They engulfed the teacher and carried her underground. The hole shrunk and the rumble grew distant. The class sat quiet, smug. A very little girl in the last row giggled.

Kathy Henderson
Come On Down

The memories are there
but remembered only in
granite
each hour something new
grows around the stone
covering it, hiding it from
view
the stone becomes just a stone
the foliage dominates
the weeds conquer all.

Chuck Hunter
Walk

I stroll along my suburban road

swimming in dirty looks

from church goers.

Thrown by those with communion wafers

melting in their mouths

(not in their hands).

Wasting a pious day.

Nancy Coleman

sexy hip-hugger chick

you make me smack my lips.

i feel jungle grab

and tropic sweat

hit me

heat me.

then you tightassed push me away

crying about the tropic rain.

Martha Hart
Indoctrination - A play in One Act

Scene: Rows of baby carriages face rostrum. A Major enters with demonstration subject, handcuffed.

(general squalling)

Attention! Classroom come to order. Today's lesson is the bayonet. This...is a bayonet. Contrary to it's appearence the bayonet is not a slashing or cutting weapon. It is most effectively used as a stabbing weapon...as thus. (scream)

More effective yet is the half-twist accomplished with a wrist action, which can do great damage to the internal organs...as thus. (scream)

I don't want to exceed your attention span, so the lesson will end here. Tomorrow's Military Science lecture will be use of tactical anti-personnel nuclear hand grenades. (scream)

Class dismissed. (exeunt)

(general squalling. Nurses enter, wheel out carriages.)

The End

Maynard Kirpalani
I walked last night
up on mission ridge
the moon alive
grass cool on my feet
I lay beside a flowing brook
sounds of water
rippling
over rocks
filled my head
Yet, I was not satisfied
I was stirred
by the sound
of a lone gray stallion
filling my eyes it turned
my stomach froze
as if
someone had grasped my
very insides
as the stallion approached
the hand reaffirmed its icy grip
slowly, methodically
it tightened

pain
soared up my back

my face flushed with fire

sweat flowed from my body the stallion continued its steady gaze

I tried
god knows I tried
to call out but my throat refused parched blistered

my body raged under the heat

still

the stallion stared

the hand became tighter blood flowed freely from my pores

the stallion turned

as if by command the hand made one last squeeze

my skull gave way
exploding fragments
rocketing into space

i slept last night
ups on mission ridge

and woke to see the sun come all over creation.

Phil Matier

bird

martha's flute speaks like

an eloquent bird,

(treep treep
cheeka cheeka
chirp).

outstanding

spirited

happy.

i never expected that from

a sparrow like her.

Luke Granfield
Variation On A Theme

I think

Of burying myself in your hair

Of golden cascades rippling shades across the sun;

Of lying in dank cool caverns, hidden behind

the silky strands of your shimmering waterfall;

Of exploring the secret world between your shoulder

and your ear;

Of finding a sweet-moss water grotte to sleep in,

And waking, find myself still gratefully lost in

that field of dried tears,

That forest of secret scented birds,

The world of your crescent throat.

Roger Beatty

I tried talking to a light bulb once. But it didn't

know a damn thing about Thomas Edison.
It Happened In Kansas

As Emy stared out of her kitchen window into
the dull gray skies of September, a dull green
flying saucer landed on a field of golden yellow
wheat that encircled the house for miles around.
Slightly bewildered Emy ran out of the kitchen,
fixing her hair on the way out. She did not bother
to shut the door, so Saint Louis, her black doberman
pinscher, followed Emy out, also seeking an answer
to the strange phenomenon. After scurrying like
little rats for several thousand inches they came
upon it. They both stood unwinded before it, paral-
yzed at the sight of it, for it was literally a cup on
a saucer, the type you would find in any diner, with
the exception that it stood approximately five stories
high and maybe fifty yards wide. After a small
time lapse of about 60 seconds, a tremendous black
hand that looked like it should be connected to the
body of a tremendous black woman, reached out of
the clouds, picked up the cup and poured several
thousand gallons of boiling hot coffee all over poor Emy and Saint Louis, then brought the cup and saucer back into the dull gray skies of September.

Matt Scott

Karen Dewey was not in the Ladies Room at Howard Johnsons. the other girl scouts called and looked and adjusted their berets and left. and Karen sat on the toilet and waited.

Kathy Donkin
Touch me

And know the world

Through these my quiet words

My death hours are fast and tight

Touch me

Carla Weiss
I could not decide which way to go

I was at a point of indecision

Hey Goooood!

please help me

Hey a blue jay going down the low road (a sign)

A Hawk's comin' up the High road

Shhhhh it's attacking the blue jay

a flurry of feathers

The Hawk's flying back where

it came from.  Back where

I came from

I am at a point of Indecision

Hey Goooood.

Matt Scott
enrico
the white haired
italian
one eyed,
fat janitor
keeps driving by me
in his pink winged cadillac
(and i see him in places you'd
never expect to see
a white haired,
italian,
one eyed,
fat janitor, like a forest road
on a drizzly autumn weekday)

Luke Granfield
sweet girl rhoda
came to the end of the song
eating her tangerine
and playing tamborine,
painted her eyes
    thighs
    lips
    and hips
then danced her dance
    and found romance
    just around the corner.

Luke Granfield

Quatrain

A swan

Overtaken

Suddenly by death

Would fold up like a white, wilted

Flower

Mavnard Kirnalani
Totally Out to Lunch

Uptight

stage fright

move on

get gone

daddy's in the bathroom

putting his eyes in a glass

he's waiting for the morning after

Brother's red

Momma's dead

Sister moans

"the dog's stoned"

And I start looking

for that hole in the wall

waiting for the morning after

Christ enters

attention centers

rage mounts

he starts to count

The days that have passed

since last he was forced into

waiting for the morning after. Phil Matier
The tenement versus the fool

Elysia, with eyes in folded tears

I lie in wait for the ceiling to fall on me:
The crack I see now folds and disappears.

Among the gloss spots and the fading smears,
I catch your face in comic irony,
Elysia: with eyes in folded tears,

Laughing at the funestal atmospheres

That cage my senses and clutch the broken Key.
The crack I see now folds and disappears

From sight, and swirls in enigmatic spheres

Of broken whorls of plaster, revealing to me
Elysia. With eyes in folded tears

As I remembered her, she yet appears

To haunt my mind, augment the agony.
The crack I see now. Fold and disappear

As the rest of the world! The fault that overhears

The quake has ruined me and ruled in tyranny.

Elysia, with eyes in folded tears

The crack I see now: folds and disappears.  John Mucci
To Tim Leary-

You are a real orange

Not seedless yet,

But it's pretty hard to be seedless

In such an orchard of selfishness

Soaking up so much sunshine

You have grown to enormous size.

The biggest balloon on the block.

The King of the crop.

I saw your mother on flick-out last night.

She acted just like an orange peel would

Thrown away, bitter,

Wishing her fruit of a son would write.

Martha Hart
I have sucked your last bones dry,
the meager marrow taunted my
frantic tongue; I marvel
that such leanness of bone
sustained such a round body.
Like a thirsty vulture I pored
over those bones, searching
for some red-blooded corner
some nourishing response;
but yet unbleached
they had been sucked dry.
Perhaps it was some cancerous growth
that made your guts so apathetic
about that vital sap
that rotted away that precious meat
from your scarecrow skeleton;
I don't know.
I don't know anything anymore;
This loveless desert has crept into my brain,
I am wild with blood-lust;
I only go on dully sucking dry bones.  

Roger Beatty
The long hot mileage in a rusty car,
the dewy silos in the scrambled fields,
the sordid coffee at the counter-bar,
the absent-minded doves across the shield,
the eider quilt soaked in the meadow grass,
the way side sandwich from a paper sack,
the shrunken billfold and the slipping gas,
the question, will the patched tire last us back,
the town memorials of wars long ago,
the sky scapes huge as on a shoreless sea,
the tranquil boats in the ponds too short to row,
late love, sweet irresponsibility,
two in the world and the world all for two,
and poverty and health and i and you.

Nick Ney
the eight-pointed red and white stop sign

pitted and gutted

the two holes above the red and white stop sign

that used to blink

looked like Oedipus in his last act.

with rusted-dry blood

dripping down the ensequined face

that called for mercy

it stood in muted tremblings and quailed

to STOP STOP STOP STOP.

I wondered who the dead Iocasta was

Whose thorns he used

To blot out the old world, and brush in a new.

John Mucci
Pumpkin Taylor sat in the waiting room of the train station with her mother and her mother's friend. "These youngsters today", said Mrs. Taylor "They just think they can do anything and get away with it. Why, even Pumpkin is just, well, just, you know, dramatic about everything. She's just always making a fuss. If I tell her to do something, you can bet she won't want to do it." Pumpkin watched her mother sullenly. Then she stood up and started to walk across the room, trailing her coat behind her. Her mother didn't notice, and kept on talking to her friend. "Pumpkin's cat died a couple of weeks ago and she cried and cried. Then she wanted to have a funeral. Honestly, where does she get these ideas? Of course I didn't let her go bury the thing. I just laughed when she wanted the silly funeral. I threw the cat out in the garbage when-- Pumpkin Taylor, come back here! Stop dragging your coat on the floor!"
Mrs. Taylor ran up to Pumpkin, who was looking at the comics in the magazine stand, picked her up, and brought her back to the seat.

Pumpkin burst into tears. "I just wanted to see the comics. Let me go. I want to have a comic." Mrs. Taylor became uncomfortably aware that everyone in the waiting room was watching them. Then a character walked in who made everyone forget Pumpkin. He wore smelly leather pants, a patchwork shirt, and old sandals with hairy toes protruding over the edge. His hair was long and wild, and his face was large and bony. He carried a knapsack and was unconcernedly eating out of a box of raisins.

"I think he's foreign," whispered Mrs. Taylor's friend.

"He looks like a bum to me," offered Mrs. Taylor.

"He could be an Arab, with that dark skin."

"He's just one of these irresponsible young people." Pumpkin stared, tears forgotten.
A tired and bored young man sat inspecting the upholstery on his seat. The door of his train car opened slowly, and admitted cold air, noise, and one small girl. She started to run through the car, then evidently changed her mind, and began to hop on one leg. She hopped up to the young man's seat, stopped, and looked at him, somehow managing to maintain her balance on one leg. "What's your name?"

"My name's Gerald, but most people call me Gerry."

"My name's Katherine Taylor, but most people call me Pumpkin." Pumpkin climbed into Gerry's seat and slid down, with her knees against the seat in front of her, until her chin was digging into her chest. "Are you foreign? Are you an Arab, or a bum?"

Gerry thought for a minute. "I'm not an Arab, and I'm not foreign." Pumpkin made signs of leaving. He said quickly, "But I suppose I am a bum,
and I've traveled in foreign countries." Pumpkin stayed.

"What's it like being a bum, and where did you travel?"

"I've been all over. I got these pants in Spain, and this shirt was made by an Italian bandana seller." Pumpkin sat up and touched the bandana shirt and the Spanish leather pants. Gerry offered her some raisins and they sat quietly.

"My cat died and my mother threw him away. She wouldn't let me bury him."

Gerry started to answer when the woman sitting in back of them shrieked, "You're sitting on my coat. It's getting all dirty. Just look what you're doing to it." Gerry stood up and looked on the back or the seat. Pumpkin looked up at the lady and started to yell.

"He wasn't sitting on your coat. You put it there. He didn't get it dirty, anyway." Gerry
silenced Pumpkin. Then he brushed the coat off, and held it so the lady could put it on. She thanked him, he apologized, and she left.

Pumpkin was astonished. "You didn't have to do that. She was mean, and you let her think that she was right."

Gerry laughed. "It got rid of her, didn't it? Maybe she won't be mean to anyone else now, anyway. At least I didn't make her more mad."

Suddenly Mrs. Taylor came seeping into the car, picked up Pumpkin, glared at Gerry, and they were gone, leaving Gerry alone with his raisins.

Pumpkin Taylor and her mother and her mother's friend got off the train. Pumpkin tried to see Gerry in the windows, and she ran the length of the train, dragging her coat behind her.

"Pumpkin Katherine Taylor, how many times do I have to tell you not to drag your coat on the
ground? Put it on and don't make a fuss."

Pumpkin's face turned sullen, and she opened her mouth. The train pulled out of the station slowly, creating a gust of wind that blew a piece of paper against Pumpkin's feet. She started to say something, but stopped. She stood still watching the train, then said, "o.k.", and put the coat on. Her mother nodded approvingly, and the three of them left the station.

Lisa Drew