

October Fog

A micro-collection of poems of autumn to winter, (mostly)

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Lonely Train

A lonely train wailing down
on a long night across town.
Under low brooding cloud
and bridges, old,
on through rainy nights, cold.
Lonely like wolf's howl,
mysterious like whale song,
woeful and weeping
the lonely train,
wailing down the long night.

A Sort of Palindrome

Murder of crows,
crow and caw
battle the seagulls
and the geese cry high
in a sunless sky
crows, gulls and geese
-gangs-
geese, gulls and crows
in a sky, sunless
and high the geese cry
the seagulls battle
caw and crow,
crows of murder.

Gateway Station

Summer faded quickly
under the first day of fall
steady streaks of rain
are sliding against the bus windows.
Last autumn's temperament was bright,
hot and blue 'till Halloween.
People with bowed heads in the rain
run from train to bus
or from bus to train.
Alongside, ribbons of cars
fly toward the jammed freeways,
tailpipe fumes mingle
with cigarette smoke
fuming from a thousand butts,
through which greedy little starlings
hop and fish.
And another train comes up
and slips into the station
through the quieting rain.

Grayness

Striding waves of the stormy sea

depths deeper than the grave.

Lurking shadows hide,

shadows baring teeth, shaved.

No sun but cold, cold fog,

from bleakness light must flee.

Gray, gray day along the cold, cold way

to striding waves of the sundering sea.

The Perfectionist

Late at night
when street lanterns flicker nervously
and the rain is heard but not seen
I see
in reflections of windows
and in mirrors in the dark
- her.

Sometimes she smiles,
sometimes she whispers
cold, cruel things -
things that would make me cry,
and often did.

Sometimes she makes me run
sometimes she makes me laugh
for no reason at all.
And always everything must be
perfect, Perfect, **PERFECT!**

When she appears in the reflections of windows
and in the dark mirrors
or in my head,
always she insists on driving
from the backseat.

The nattering reflection,
smiling back at me,
in the darkness,
late at night.

Shut up!

The Trees Of Lincoln Street

I remember the trees of Lincoln Street.
Beneath their leaves I would sit.
A green isle of deep shade
on the merciless days of summer.

How grand they were,
stretching from 4th to 1st Avenue.
Like god-hands their branches seemed -
a refuge from the scorching sun.

But one day I came by
and they'd all been chopped down.
Not even a mean stump remained.
Only rods and concrete
and tracts of grayish mud.

No soft, green ivy underneath,
no place for the fluttering moths at night.
Nowhere to catch the summer breeze,
no place to sit and take one's ease.

The trees that were tall and old,
and standing since forever,
they are gone with nothing left but dead land.
There is no shade from the heat on gray concrete,
which is why I no longer go down Lincoln Street.

These Last Years

These last years,
which have brought pain and misery
and happiness and Light
now find me reaping
an armful of mirthful things:
the healing of beautiful music,
the beauty of stars,
the thousand shades of Oregon's green,
air, soft and delicious with rain
and a quiet mind.
A life lived well enough,
enough as I could manage it.
Now have come the days of the change;
days of chilled mornings and falling leaves.
The dew of youthful times gone
and to it I say: "Stay gone!"
Bitter wisdom from foolish mistakes
has mellowed into reflection
in the autumn of life,
before the stark nakedness
of winter and its grave.

October Fog

Leaden gray sky
crackling with lavender lines
spreads over a patchwork river
of mirrored silver
and rippled surface.
Morning September air,
soft as downy wings,
blows moist breath, lightly,
and vanishes like fairy dust
when October fog falls in.