

A Collection of
Louise Dart's Poetry

How blissfully my day goes by
It takes a lot to make me cry.

I'm gleeful when I turn a phrase
Parts of speech enrich my days.

With fixed intent I look for joy
When proper words I can employ.

They satisfy an appetite
I seem to relish every bite.

True poetry's a work of art
I'm glad to have a minor part.

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Nostalgia

A love there was that never can return
Through bud and bloom full cycle grew and died
Its lingering ashes can no longer burn
In memory only will it even hide.

Time-earned strength, of years of toil begotten
A rugged fortitude from hardships grew
Gone - all gone, but surely not forgotten
The full and lean years both so quickly flew.

Never can we quite again recapture
Those first emotions, or that virgin faith
Nor can we practice that first joy and rapture
Stamina becomes elusive wraith.

Once more we travel now the well-worn pathways
Seeking to relive remembered thrills
Wandering over memory-haunted highways
Trudging up and down imagined hills.

Ever moving, seeking, finding, losing
Plodding, slowly, blindly, arms entwined
Through the dusk of life, confused, confusing
What is just ahead with what's behind.

The Spring of hope: the dawn of budding powers
Mature decision, Summer's practiced fun
Autumn's harvest, golden, full-ripe hours
Winter, soon to come - the day is done. (1975)

Taking Correction

(1)

When, with tact, my glaring fault you bare
It's well that I be mindful and aware.

It merits pondering to adjust my course
I profit more from guidance than remorse.

So seldom can I simply make amends
And it's on learning that repair depends.

Can sharing skills that you already hold
Insult my willingness to change the mold?

Correction is a gift from one who cares
Whence comes the stigma criticism bears?

(Printed by the National Library of Poetry, 1996)

(2)

The old stigma of criticism
is ruining our Education System.

(3)

If it is politically incorrect
To point out failure or neglect,
Children reach maturity
Ignorant of all their frailty
And learn what's right much later, when
They fail again and yet again.

Not Having It Your Way

Decrepit Granny's hoary head
Though seasoned many years
Is prone to stark senility
Her tales elicit tears.

Old friends have now preceded her
(A shunning by attrition)
She's lost all those who needed her
We pity her condition.

Survival in declining years
Seems tragic to endure.
Illness lurks to feed one's fears
While lonely death seems sure.

So tenuous and brittle have
The threads of life become
One anxiously anticipates
The day it will be done.

At last, in wilted listlessness
Helpless she rocks and stares
And endlessly awaits some sign
That anybody cares.

If you have read this sorry tale
Critiqued this dreary rhyme
You're practicing the patience
You'll need when comes your time.

My Man

My man, my partner, and my mate
Was soul and master of my fate.

Politeness he personified.
His gentleness can't be denied.

Noble, honest, brave and kind
Loyal as any man you'll find.

Neat and orderly and clean
Never rowdy, rough, or mean.

Lofty-minded, heart of gold
Never selfish, careless, cold.

Ever cheerful, ever bright
No argument that he was right.

No need to ask me how I know.
We married fifty years ago. (1996)

Stiff Winds

The North wind and the South wind
Are having quite a fight.
The North wind started blowing,
Attacking in the night.

Then from the South, a warm front
Blows hard against its foe,
But only briefly, fleeing
Before a greater blow.

Our flagstaff starts to crackle
To sway and strain and bend
According to the strength of
The rivals who contend.

Wind and flag together
Can make an awful racket.
It seems this sort of weather
Can pierce my warmest jacket.

Birds all search for shelter;
Squirrels choose to hide.
A cat will find a motor car
Where heat remains inside.

The North wind and the South wind
Are in a bitter battle,
Perhaps to see which one of them
Can make the windows rattle. (1996)

Mathematics of Old Age

In human terms, I'm growing old
By reason of time's flight.
I've added to my age each year
Subtracted from my height.

Appreciation's multiplied
By troubles and by cares,
Dividing my attention
To details and repairs.

My day is filled with pondering
Confusion and neglect,
Nights, with dreams, adventures
I sustain, but can't direct.

My friends and my acquaintances
Diminish and decrease,
Adding to my loneliness
While frailties increase.

The Semi-Perks of Old Age

Aging's an experience
That's quite a joy to me.
Consider the alternative
And you will soon agree.

I gain a lot of privilege
Just sporting pure white hair.
But sitting in a wheel-chair
Just proves I am not there.

My body may be damaged, but
I won't admit I hurt.
I can't let being penniless
Make me as cheap as dirt.

I've finished raising offspring,
The best course I could take.
To count myself impoverished
Would be grave mistake.

South Padre Island

Splashing along at the water's edge
Aware of sights and sound and smells,
This unreal place, the salt-damp breeze
Conscious of self and shells and swells,
We feast upon freedom to move about
To scream at gulls, and laugh and shout,
Kick flotsam and jetsam along the beach
Move ropes and shells within out reach.

What phantom magnet brings us here
Despite our weak resistance?
Did we deposit treasure here
In a previous existence?
As though in some forgotten past
We dig in with our spoons,
Was it perhaps our treasure chest
Secreted in these dunes?

Swift sundown dulls the blowing sand
Erasing every trace of man.
With ending day comes color-blindness
The nighttime sea is free from kindness.
But who are we to criticize
The color of water, or wind, or skies?
New color will come with the coming dawn
And all is well - except we've gone.

Finishing Touches

I know my days are numbered
Wish I knew Number One
I wouldn't start new projects
But finish what's begun.

I'd have a fresh shampoo, I'm sure
I'd pick up all my clothes.
I'd leave all letters answered
Before I took my doze.

When what was left was counted
Furnishings all sold,
I wouldn't leave for others
My pan of unbaked rolls.

I know my days are numbered
My hair has long been white.
What I don't know is whether
They'll end by day or night.

March 1999

Dear Travis,

I am getting very eager
Your trips to visit are getting meager
Please write another little rhyme
To bring in hand, not mailed this time.
I have a wish that can't come true
To share the days of our lives with you!

Gram

Maxim

Success is based on aptitude
Flavored well with attitude.
This is no idle platitude
It's true in any latitude.

For Rent

I have a nice old duplex
Cozy as can be
Hard beside the Catclaw
Feels like home to me.

It comes with handy parking
Underneath a tree
The birds you think unwelcome
Will be chased off by me.

I need a nice new neighbor
With whom I can relate
A young and working couple
Or lady without mate.

I'd like to keep the household
Completely free from smoke
My aversion to tobacco
Cannot be deemed a joke.

So if you are a candidate
Be sure to let me know
I think I'm needing only one
Don't line up in a row.

Doing Double Duty

Permit my day to so begin
That I may wish I were a twin.

Let me be ever optimistic
Seldom wholly moralistic.

I would always wear a smile
As though a frown were out of style.

Deliver me from noisy crowds
And sudden gloomy threatening clouds.

Prepare for me a jolly greeting
For every person I'll be meeting.

And may my words ring ever true
Especially when I speak to you.

Survival Guide

Survival may be limitless
Reserved for those with little stress,
Who keep their hands and bodies clean
Avoid all things remotely mean
Shun the crossings where lights are yellow
Give right-of-way to the other fellow
Sit and relax with any good book
Don't give skis a second look
Avoid bicycles and pick-up trucks
Eat their peanuts without the shucks
Eat oats and apples and stop to chew
Whose words are kind and always true
Leave the liquor to someone else
Finish a cone before it melts
I could go on ad infinitum
Like "pet your dogs, but never bite 'em".
Longevity is a joyous gift
For some with humor, joy, and thrift.

Keeping House

When I was but a little child
I'd build myself a nest
Or make some small clay dishes
And treat my doll as guest.

Growing up, I made a home
Of every house we had
Mothered many children
And kept them fed and clad.

My greatest joy has been to see
My grown-up brood together
Without or with their progeny
Regardless of the weather.

Now I'm playing house once more
Have only me to please
Unless there's someone at the door
It's just me and Louise.

Life Beyond Retirement

Today I'm sitting pretty
Satisfied and smug
Complacent on this joyride
Without a dog to hug.

I shop alone - no quibbling
I cook just what I will
Sleep well, sans spouse or sibling
No static, hushed nor shrill.

I may have lost some marbles
And play with half a deck
But when I look for money
I need only write a check.

I'm practicing frugality
As all ancestors should
Striving toward civility
I hope that's understood.

My shelf life now is limited
My warranty expired
Life's been more than I had hoped
Since I have been retired.

Incompatibility

It's not the talent hid from me
That I possess
Brings me distress.

It's gifts of mine you cannot see
I must confess
Brings strife and stress.

'Twixt you and me

It's talent that I lack, but know
I do command
On every hand
That makes me feel so very low.

When you admit
I've none of it -

That is the blow.

Impugn my faith, deny I'm gallant
My efforts flout
But never doubt

My latent talent.

Ailments

My headache to you may seem trivial
To me it is less than convivial.
Arthritis you may think is minor
I can list a dozen things finer.
My sinus congestion is chronic
I'd rather the fault than tonic.

--My personal theory of relativity

Rhyming

At the slightest hint of a catchy phrase
Especially in these lonely days
I rhyme.

Even when I put out the light
In early, mid- or dead of night
I rhyme.

From early days of childhood
When little, if any, I understood
I rhyme.

In the boredom of retirement
Good humor, the sole requirement
I rhyme
And rhyme and rhyme.

How Are We Raising Our Children?

An appetite for horror
Among our children thrives
Nurtured by the cable
And games that fill their lives.

First guns, and swords and arrows
Then in reality
They play at death and wounding
And foster savagery.

As though it's a case of us or them
They practice hate, inflict mayhem. (1996)

U.S.A. Travel Limericks

This old Texas gal named Louise
Drove all through the country with ease.
 When asked her opinion
 About the dominion
She answered "I thought I would freeze."

She drove through the state we call Kansas
Where softly a gentle breeze fans us
 We passed a used cow lot
 And breathed the wind, now hot
We take whatever life hands us.

In southern Nebraska the flowers
Nourished by gentle, cool showers
 Inspired a study
 By me and my buddy
That surely will take many hours.

The lovely green hills of Nebraska
I'm tempted to tell ya, not ask ya
 All topped with white blooms
 And grasses with plumes
I doubt I will get to Alaska.

While driving across Minnesota
Just east, as you know, from Dakota
 I passed through Duluth
 I tell you the truth
Consuming some figs called Kadota.

Up and around Lake Superior
I drove, though the trip got much drearier
 Past iron ore docks
 And customs and rocks
Toronto, to me was much cheerier.

Wild blueberries grow in New York
Ignoring the arduous work
 I ate some, the rest
 (But only the best)
I brought home then ate pie with my fork.

A beautiful state is Virginia
You should go there if you've got it in ya
 The roadsides have poppies
 I wish I had copies
But you can't copy poppies, now kin ya.

When through Arkansas I was traveling
While trying to keep from unraveling
 A sign said "Rough Road"
 As any fool knowed -
The Highway Department was graveling.

When voyagers venture to roam
They drive cars embellished with chrome
 But coming toward me
 As plainly I see
Not a truck - not a bus - but a home.

Miscellaneous Limericks

Calming stress with a tasty Cream Cone
Was a habit to which I was prone
 At a place where one dines
 Was a space with two signs
"Handicaps" and "Tow away zone."

I think I've been put to a test
While having my usual rest
 With no time to duck
 I survived with pure luck
My ceiling fan fell - what a jest!

A kindly old lady next door
Dropped by, as often before
 Returning my dish
 Now, could she just wish
I'd be filling it one time more?

Arthritis, the bane of existence
For all who have lasted the distance.
 It comes and it goes
 Almost never shows
It's noted most for its persistence.

Magnificent fields of sunflowers
Present their big blooms to the showers
 Doing their best
 To turn to the west
Although it's been raining for hours.

On Mondays, for sure, I go swimmin'
With several anachronous women
 We look for no change
 But hope to arrange
To go on with our difficult livin'.

Most music's akin to pollution
At best, it could use some dilution
 They play it so loud
 Their head's in a cloud
The problem defies resolution.

Duster

There was a blue budgie named Duster
Who used all the words he could muster
 He took to a tree
 And soon so did we
Lest Duster should lose all his luster.

In order to make him come nearer
We flashed his toy bell and a mirror
 He fell for the bait
 Of bananas, but wait!
How come little Duster seems dearer?

Louise-isms

Much of my time lately is being spent in gathering inclination.

Neither ignorance nor darkness has much to recommend it.

There's no use looking for a bubble that has already burst.

My toes are inured to ill treatment, having been kicked around by a heel for their lifetime.

Respect is earned
Success is learned
Offensive pity spurned
The useless burned.

Quotes

"Days of rage following yesterday's attack..."

"This is unbelievable, if it is true."

"Hey, man, like you know, look - right?"

"Evaporate the people in time of flood..."

"A frustum is the bottom of a cone when smaller cone is removed from top."

"You wonder whether Enough is ever Sufficient."

He said - I heard

"Rely on the Weather Channel." - "We lie on the Weather Channel."

"I'd love for your analysis [urinalysis] to be correct." (Limbaugh, 6-3-98)

"I have made it clear the Bosnia effort would entail [inhale] some risks." (Clinton)

Optimist

It's proof that I'm an optimist
It's very plain to see
When twenty-seven puzzle books
Come addressed to me.

--

If evergreens should learn to shiver
Think what a load of snow they'd deliver!

--

Policy of Optimism

Life is great and I am glad
For all that falls my lot,
Happy to accept with joy
Whatever comes my way.
Essentials and necessities
I take with thankful heart,
Knowing well it won't be long
'til I perforce depart.

Wrong Way

Rings in her earlobes
On her fingers, more rings.
Rings on her eyebrows
And intimate things.

Paint on her eyelids
On her mouth, more paint.
Tattoos almost everywhere
Rings and paint ain't.

What a bold statement
These wild things tell.
We were headed for heaven
But maybe we fell!

Observances

Holes in the heels
Runs in the knees
My poor old hose
Are on their last legs!

-=-

Fringes and ruffles
A placket and a pleat
Jackets and mufflers
Hide what we eat.

-=-

Sometimes to move forward
You must retreat
As though there be a peanut
In the way of your shopping cart.

Conclusions and Deductions

I need independence
I require peace
Hunger for security
As needs for aid increase.

I desire comfort
Crave some calm seclusion
I admire excellence
And avoid delusion.

I relish calm, not conflict
Intelligence, not folly
Prize promptness, and integrity
Not what to some seems jolly.

Gratuitous unkindness
Leaves me feeling rotten
I recall a few experiences
I'd rather I'd forgotten. (1997)

Appreciation

I thrive upon appreciation
Approval spurs imagination
So influenced, I'll be prolific
Mostly generally, not specific.

Production has been on the wane
Applause has brought it up again
Acknowledging your attitude
I accept with gratitude.

When again I lose the muse
I'll look to you to light my fuse! (1998)

The Joys of Children

A stalwart son refined with time
Is a joy surpassing measure;

A tactful girl with wit sublime,
A truly lifelong treasure;

Healthy twins who can't yet climb,
The ultimate in pleasure.

And How Are You?

I'm good as gold - fit as a fiddle
A bit past old - and thick in the middle.

I'm as well as they come - Feeling just fine
Except for my temper, a ray of sunshine

I'm sharp as a tack, clean as a whistle
One thing, however, can make me bristle:

When asked "How are you?" I'm inclined to say,
Not wanting to argue, "I'm lame today."

I'm right as rain, so don't complain
Nor ask me how I feel again. (1996)

Dear Doctor:

When I sleep at night,
My hands both go to sleep
And there begins within my palms
A pain both sharp and deep.

My first two fingers and my thumb
Are aching at the nails
And sometimes when they move just wrong
An urgent pain prevails.

So please do something, do it quick
I think my hands both make me sick.

-=-

The boughs on trees
Are bowing to the breeze

-=-

Sibling Memories

Once I had an older brother
Whom I scarcely knew at all.
Of course I knew his name and age
And that he grew quite tall.

The oldest of ten children, he;
I, seventh - almost lost
'mongst the big boys and my sisters
Seldom hugged - but often bossed.

When we moved from Minnesota
Older boys had left the nest.
Only later I remember
Their pranks, their repartee, and jest.

Now the calendar has captured
Nearly all my kith and kin.
Only now I read their writings
Knowing not where to begin.

Sorting through my filing system
Finding things I couldn't toss
Getting newly reacquainted -
For the first time feel my loss. (1996)

Correspondence to the Hubble Telescope

(1)

The Hubble, poor Hubble
Has terrible trouble
And who do you think will care?

A near-sighted telescope
How can it ever hope
To see what's away out there?

But Hark! There's a plan to go
Up through the sky we know
To make complete repair.

Then we can truly see
All the activity
Telling us what, when, and where.

Hobbling Hubble,
Bundle of rubble
To float with a limp is no fun.

When Hubble's in trouble
We'll come on the double
If it dials 9-1-1.

Now Hubble, dear bubble,
Don't get into trouble
Away up there in the sky!

Avoid the black holes
One of their goals
Is to swallow whatever goes by!

(3)

Oh, Hubble - Hey! Hubble!
Start looking for trouble!
Jupiter's being bombarded.

Get into this game
Defend your good name
Or explain how you'll be regarded.

(5)

Thanks, gentle Hubble
We hope it's no trouble
To furnish the copy you yield.

Recall your objective
Your lens is effective
And a nebula's out in left field.

(2)

We sent the Hubble to scan the sky
We watched and waited; it went awry.
We sent men out to nudge, repair
And mend its flaws - above the air.

What awful findings mark its work
A world somewhere may maybe lurk
In dark and cloudy Milky Way
Or past the biggest dipper, say.

We boldly sent it to inform.
Our brightest minds made it perform
Eager to know what it could unveil
They risked chagrin if it should fail.

I guess that some things might be worse
Scouting the expanding universe.
Hubble may find a hole that's black
But please don't ever bring one back!

(4)

Take care, little Hubble
You're in for more trouble
For, down in La Silla, Chile
There is a device
That seems so precise
That the stars dance in sparkling
array! (1994)

(6)

Now, Hubble, hear this
Prepare for a shift
We're planning a move for you

Not exactly a gift
More like a lift
Just farther into the blue. (1996)

More Correspondence to the Hubble Telescope

(7)

Hark, Hubble and hear
How early next year
Comes "Origins"
Helper and neighbor

Then a few years hence
After efforts intense
You'll have an assist
In your labor

Then, Little Hubble
With much, or less trouble
You'll be reduced
To obsolete rubble

Scrapped, I might say
Without much delay
Replaced, improved
Much to my dismay

(8)

Hello little Hubble
This isn't real trouble,
We've come to improve and renew.

To change out some parts
Keep you in tune with our hearts
And your troubles are bound to be few.

We're on a space walk
Using tools and not talk
An art used in earth-bound ballet

Now that you're ready
Just hold your gait steady
And soon we will be on our way.

Bryan's on the Honor Roll

I rocked a tiny infant boy
Sixteen years ago,
A little bell-like tinkling tune
Proclaimed the local news at noon.

With flashing eyes, the baby turned
To reach - to touch the welcomed sound.
From that day on he seemed to yearn
To search for news - He loved that sound.

From that time, too, his good right hand
Refused to serve him well.
Why others chose right-handedness
This boy could never tell.

New lenses help his tired eyes
So reading now is "cool".
Basketball provides more fun
Than other games at school.

The accolades he's garnered
Make this granny wince.
Rewards are hard to furnish
Regardless of the hints. (1995)

New contacts, now - Time marches on
High school is behind him
Computer science - college bound!
Sarah, where'd you find him? (1998)

Water Exercise

Arthritis is a common human plight
It comes to stay all morning and all night.
Then, taunting, leaves, so soon to reappear
It scares me, though I have a modest share.

When pain replaces motion in a joint
We'll buy most any potion to anoint.
Now I must try to lose a bit of weight
In water exercise participate.

Some doctors can, whenever pains increase
Prescribe a pill, our faulty joints to grease.
Of course we're grateful for a bit of peace
The problem is they cost a buck a piece.

So, in the pool, before we face the day,
In groups, arthritics wade, and swim, and play
And kick and stretch, and will joints to obey
No cure we find, but hope defies decay.

Wet Ones

It's true she thrives in water
It's plain as it can be
She's at the pool each morning
With such vitality.

She swims and sports and splashes
So long as we are there
She bubbles, blows, and thrashes
To dissipate all care.

To Sarah

Bless My little grey-haired girl
Bless every tiny silver curl.

Bless with many happy days
All those who serve in loving ways.

Bless obliging weary feet
Sustaining mine, no longer fleet.

Give calm composure and reserve
To one whose pleasure is to serve.

Hold her hand when trials loom
Help her straighten up her room.

Bless my little grey-haired girl
My crowning glory is a pearl

#1 - National Library of Poetry, 1995

Heroic are they who
with nothing to say
Cannot be persuaded
to say it.

How weak a defense
has one with good sense
Who insists on a chance
to display it.

There may be a way
for someone to say
"Sit down!" and have
them obey it.

A vacuous wealth
of tales of ill health
Is a dragon with no one
to slay it.

Time

The sanctity of time should be
Exalted as we build,
Treated as the shrine with which
Our very life is filled.

The measurement of time began
So many moons ago.
Today each span is registered
Neither fast nor slow.

We live our childhood as though
It's made of wasted days.
But in the tender years, we know
Our learning evokes praise.

The time afforded each of us
We slight or sanctify.
Our element of impetus
Is finite in supply. (1996)

On Being and Doing

Don't tell me I "ought"
Don't tell me I "should"
Whatever I am, I am.

Don't say "You might"
Or "I wish you would"
Whatever I do, I do.

I don't want to hear
"Why don't you try?"
Whenever I can, I can.

However I live
I'll never deny
Whenever I'm through, I'm through.

What to Do

My sheets are clean
The dishes done
What shall I do
To have some fun?
No feast to cook
No race to run
No use to sit
Out in the sun
Play Solitaire?
Concoct a pun?
A PUZZLE BOOK!
The game is won.

The National Budget

We need a balanced budget
In Washington, D.C.
So close a base in Arkansas
And some in Tennessee
But not the only income source for
All my family.

We need a balanced budget, yeah,
But not at any price
No budgetary license
Or any such device
For each of us, a senator's
Allowance would be nice.

We need a balanced budget
But not on any terms
All your former efforts
Tend to make us squirm
Save us all our apples;
Just discard the worms. (1996)

'Tis the Season

Check the list
Send a card
Make a snowman
Pack it hard.

Deck the tree
Hang a star
Welcome children
From afar.

Wrap a gift
Tie a bow
Hang a sprig
of mistletoe.

Find a Santa
Make a snap
Of the children
on his lap.

Dress a dolly
Knit a mitten
Buy some holly
Give a kitten.

Pop some corn
Watch it go!
It's Christmas
If you didn't know.

What's in a Name?

My mother called me "Weezie"
My father called "Snooks"
Sometimes I wonder who I am
Should I go by the books?

When voting, I sign Mildred
It's Louise K. on my checks
When married, I became a Dart
I wonder what comes next.

A Full Life

In eighty years, or so, I've seen
Fields of corn grow lush and green,
Niagara Falls and ocean waves,
Redwoods, geysers, canyons, caves.
I rode cross-country on a train
Later to fly back again.

I've seen a swan on man-made lake
His reflection, and his wake,
A humming bird upon her nest,
Robins pulling worms with zest.

I've seen a mother deer with twins,
A river where it first begins
A chick that struggled from its shell
A feat accomplished very well.

A son upon a marble slab
My heart rebounded from the stab.
I've seen a plane fall from the sky,
For plane and pilot, sad good-bye.

A snake upon a fig-tree limb.
I wasted little time with him.

Royal Rhyme - Apology to Chaucer (ababbcc) [iambic pentameter]

The Royal herd stands in a stagnant lot,
Expecting to be fed some hay or grain.
All feeling most unwieldy and besot.
Adulterated feed destroyed their brain.
Please, sir, what justice can a cow attain?
They struggle, slip, and stagger 'til they drop.
Please signal 9-1-1 or call a cop!

Commitment to Excellence

The wise man bests disaster in his youth
Riches lost can rankle mature souls
Natural growth from child to man, in truth
Is upward, ever upward toward your goals
But trip, and fall, and land back on the dole
Like chicks left out in rain, you wilt and die
Through life, let "ever better" be our cry.

Our Flowering Display

Our garden is surrounded by
A sturdy fence and gate.
Inside, a formal garden that
Devoted hands create.

The fountains all cooperate
They splash, or turn to ice
And leave the air unscented
But smelling rather nice.

But blossoms are the essence of
This lovely little place
They are treated with a deference
Befitting their true grace.

Rolling chairs are welcomed at
Our flowering display
A come-and-go reception
To view this grand bouquet.

Gardeners will keep the walks
And blow the leaves away
And replace with healthy plantings when
The older ones decay.

The pattern of the plantings
So completely fills the plot.
What happens when there's more to plant
But not a vacant spot?

Living and Dying

The tapestries of life have shown
What she had made or bought or grown
Should be spent or tossed aside
For, after all, she will have died
Having reaped what she had sown.

When I have died, I'll have no need
No wishes, preferences nor greed
In having taken my last breath
Relinquishing life's hold on death
I'll have no options, none indeed. (1999)

At the Pool

In seasoned rhythm, in each day
An hour or so we spend
An aging lot, like it or not,
We reach, and stretch, and bend.

The pool is brimming, some are swimming
The wading group is in action
Splashing is banned, the music canned
There's little room for factions.

We try to keep a patterned measure
Some for healing, some for pleasure
We work together very well
But, under water, who can tell? (1998)

The Weather

The morning sky is redder than fire
Along with white and blue
With purple, gray, and orange
Tawny and silvery, too.

Wait till the sun peeps over the hill
Of a sudden, the colors diffuse and fade
Only the clouds hang light.

What kind of weather will this day bring?
We'll know before the night. (1998)

Misses Rister Greet Mister Rister's Sister

Mister Rister's sister
Came to visit one day.
Misses Rister kissed her
Invited her to stay.

However, Mr. Rister
Blushing with dismay
Allowed as how
It's just for now
Come what may.

Humanity

Strangers touched my life today
Quietly, gently giving cheer.

Reflecting on humanity
Tears would fall from there to here.

Sometimes in life's capricious ways
Experiences compel displays.

Moments of nobility
Exhibit life's fragility. (1999)

Poetry

Words and cadence of my design.

A House, a Home

Let this house become a home
Where gracious souls will like to come
Where blessings are extended from
Where neighbors hear a cordial greeting
Of muted tones at every meeting.
Let there be no lack or dearth
Of love or harmony or mirth.
Let this house become a home
With polished language, glossy chrome. (1996)

J.D. Stone

Today, and to my great delight
I met a very gentle man
Whose skills affect my family
As much as any other can.

So softly-spoken, none could tell
How nearly deaf he is.
Of voices heard throughout the house
The softest tones were his.

The make-up of this gentleman
His attitude toward life
I gathered indirectly
From sitting by his wife. (1996)

Back in an Hour or Two (limerick)

So long, adios, and adieu
For a while I am parting from you
The pool's at the brink
If I don't sink
Will be back in an hour or two.

So long, adios, and adieu
For a while I am parting from you
The pool's at the brim
I go for a swim
Be back in an hour or two.

So long, adios, and adieu
I go for a restful shampoo
In an hour or two
I'll appear before you
With an attractive hair-do.

Over the Mountain (doggerel)

In the spring time, the rippling rills,
the new-born streams emerge
from among the rocks of the Northern Rockies.
They suddenly change direction
at the Great Divide.
Noticeably growing as they descend
the Western slope, producing
a great stream within a few miles -
This mountainside view
is awe inspiring
as it gives rise to deep reflection.

Dignity Wanted!

True dignity, it seems to me,
Is very hard to find.

In most of us Americans
It cannot be defined.

Play-acting is the nearest thing
Society can yield.

Lacking a nobility
Our dignity's concealed. (1996)

State Park Picnic

Our cooler is loaded
Our hamper is packed
State park is waiting
That's a sure fact.

Be ready by four and
We'll roast a few dogs.
Dress in loose clothing,
Comfortable togs.

And after our supper
We'll pop us some corn
And sit by the fire
Till early next morn.

We'll toss a few Frisbees
Pitch a few balls
Run a few races
Sustain a few falls.

Put up a tent
Hang a tall swing
Do crazy, insane
And immature things.

Preparing our fire
We'll choose a good site
If there's competition
We'll put up a fight.

Fick Fossil Facility

Fick Fossil Facility
Has some fancy stuff
Of a famous female, foxy and tough.

There fossilized fragments
She frequently found
By her frontier flat as she walked around.

She fashioned a flag, fully unfurled
All figures and pattern and shapes in the world
Formats with symmetry, color, and grace
Frequently framed and in its own space.

What fabulous talent, to fabricate things
Of fibers and feathers and frivolous strings,
And frame them with fossils fixed all around
And hang them where families and friends will be found.

Cable TV

Cable TV in review
Warrants quite a few
Catcalls and a "Boo".

Comedy, though amusing
Holds little that's worth using,
But some will bear excusing.

Soap operas have little worth.
Compared to life on earth
They don't produce much mirth.

Religions have nothing new
Unless you're very blue
They offer dull review.

I can't warm up to sports
No matter who reports.
So spare me greens and courts.

Cartoons all leave me cold
I've passed their childish hold
Perhaps I'm just too old.

Politics could be fun
When all is said and done
Depends on who will run.

What remains is news
So that is what I choose
So what have I to lose?

Purse Inventory

Periodically I check my purse
To see what's down inside
I find my old, elusive comb
And see where gum balls hide.

I find a few old pennies
And pencils in the cracks
I tip the whole thing over
And give it two hard whacks.

And there, to my astonished glee
I find my often lost car key
And Grandma's old gold wedding ring,
Or some such other silly thing.

And, if I'm lucky, traveler's checks
Left over from cross-country treks.

South Dakota Bus Trip

With luggage packed and bags in hand
We left this town to view the land.
We rounded corners, crested hill
Emerged from tunnels, sensed the thrills.
Over bridges, around pig-tails
Down new paths, scarce more than trails,
Saw fossils lie where they have lain
Since days of Abel and/or Cain.
Amazing bridges, made from trees
Like lovely fashioned porch settees.
The rocks looked stacked there - in their places
Mountains seemed to have carved faces.
Absorbed, immersed in scenes like these
How could we but return well-pleased.
Europe may be the place for fun
But USA is second to none. (1992)

Superlatives

The heights of sympathy can soar,
The essence of true friendship glows,
Aroused when nursing child or friend.

There's enmity, malicious war
In-born, in-bred, as natural foes
When serpents and the beasts contend.

See nature's grandeur symbolized
In lofty falls and misty spray.
Niagara ever flows the same.

Utter dependence summarized
Is in a new-born babe today
Helpless, devoid of strength or blame.

There seem a kind of rivalry
A sort of stubbornness is there
Between a kite string and the wind.

There's grim responsibility
That falls upon the hank of hair
Whereon a chignon has been pinned.

Geriatric

Lord help us each to daily strive
To help ourselves to stay alive
As age pursues with daily strides
And stark decline haunts us, besides.

Grant us Lord, a humble heart
And quiet spirit, for
We need more patience to accept
Our future's fearful store.

Deliver us from friendlessness
We do not care for grief.
Our loathing for all loneliness
Is nearly past belief.

But when our old infirmities
Make living past endurance
This grudging breath will yield to death.
We leave you our insurance.

Childhood Lost

What has happened to our kids?
A whole generation is on the skids.

Little girls skip their childhood
And leap headlong into motherhood.

Why do children mature so soon,
Erupting full-blown from their cocoon?

Something's been added to their oatmeal!
And other things - What is the deal?

Vitamins, colors, something sweet
To make them grow and have big feet!

Uncle Sam, help! There should be a law
Take away additives and help us find pa!

Ocean Visit

The ocean is waiting
That's a sure fact;
We're coming a-visiting
Without or with tact.

Weigh anchor, you sailors
Rig up your sail;
Our vans and our trailers
Will come without fail.

Prepare for a camper
A group, or a throng;
We're loading a hamper
We'll bring it along.

So show us your cajuns
And your own chateau;
We're eager - and aging
So speed up the show.

And when we're together
Again as before,
No matter the weather,
Just keep down the ROAR! (1992)

To Mr. Charles Osgood

I want a copy of the tomes
That hold your news contained in poems.

I like the rhymes and rhythms, too
About things either old or new.

Please send a single copy, for
I'm sad I can't contribute more.

It tickles me to think I might
Be first to order what you write.

So send it soon and greatly please
This white-haired grandma named Louise. (1990)

The Tax Man Cometh

There's a tax to be paid on my earnings
A tax on whatever I spend
One of my innermost yearnings
Is to know if it ever will end.

A tax is attached to my dinner
They say there's a tax in my bread
Because I am not a beginner
I know there's a tax on my bed.

My house is a target for taxing
It's hundreds of dollars a year
They're using computers, and faxing
I'm in taxes up to my ears.

My car can't escape all their taxes
Whenever it's fixed, there's a tax
A tax on the gas and on waxes
There's nowhere I know they relax.

They tax me to pay their own wages
Then vote each other a raise
I pay in one lump or in stages
I'll be paying the rest of my days.

And while I am taxed so severely
It's wasted and squandered away
It's loaned and dispatched cavalierly
As though there's no piper to pay.

It's time now to vote for some changes
A time to ask for relief
As far as influence ranges
According to each one's belief. (1992)

Tercet

Sometimes a dreary day drags on
I have no one to lean upon
My energy has come and gone.

I have no gossip tales to swap
The mailman even fails to stop
My trusty car is in the shop.

But night will come and will provide
Me with a self-assured stride
I'll lose my loneliness and pride.

Doors will open by themselves
Exposing treasures on the shelves
Where anyone can help themselves.

Or throngs will court me, folks in streams
Will lure me into rare extremes.
Can "Candid Camera" match my dreams? (1994)

Consciousness - A Near-Death Experience

I think I judge the soul to be
A breath of wind beside the sea
A speck of all humanity.

And when the dust returns to dust
As sure as taxes, come it must,
It's final fusion will be just.

Now when I know my end is near
I will accept it without fear
For every doubt will disappear.

Then what theories are best?
At last, when comes the final test
We'll have the answer to our quest.

Though darts of doubt at me be hurled
My banner only half unfurled
I owe this wisdom to the world!

All Caught Up!

My kitchen smells of gingerbread
My knick-knacks all are dusted
My garden tools are put away
Where none will become rusted.

My house was never cleaner
My dishes are all done
My garden never greener
The weeds pulled - every one.

My windows gleam, or so it seems
But I'm about to drop
The mail is in - the garbage out
My car is in the shop!

My Shadow and I

I have a little shadow who
Looks lumpy on the rocks
I have a hard time telling
His shoe tops from his socks.

He never wears my colored shirts
But likes my floppy hats
He doesn't have my blondy hair
Blue eyes, and such as that.

He folds up at the corner of
The garden's wooden fence
And after supper, stretches out
He doesn't have good sense.

And when we go a-fishin'
He keeps a perfect hush
When his head is in the water
Or even in the brush.

My shadow's always hungry
Whenever I am too
We have a perfect friendship
And good friends are so few.

Making Notes

I had a little memo
Where it is I cannot say
I wrote it on the back of there
And threw it all away.

I know I can't remember, so
I'm careful to make notes
I write them on a paper pad
Then use it to make boats.

I keep looking for my memory
Or anything I wrote
I'm a champion forgetter
And it always gets my goat!

My Eighties

I'm sailing through my eighties
With break-neck speed it seems
By the time that I am ninety
I'll think it's all been dreams.

Today I'm busy fixing
My elbows, hips, and knees
My weight and my blood pressure
And problems such as these.

My fences all are mended
Relationships are cool
And I have my diploma from
That old and well-known school.

I'm content now, being all alone
In a quiet neighborhood,
But I admit a visit from
My kinfolk would be good.

Construction Crew

The noise had begun with the summer,
Chattering all the day long
The whole atmosphere was a bummer
They never quit playing that song.

With fork lifts and mauls and great log chains
They hoisted, they urged and they prized
Brought in dump trucks and air hammers
Made racket we hated, despised.

Their cohorts with blustering power
Relentless, resolved, resolute
Disrupted our garden and bowers
Shattered our charming repute.

Then with cool and calm resolution
They folded their tents to retreat
And cooling their well-fashioned sidewalks
Opened new paths to our feet. (1995)

Nursing School

A nurse is cool, orderliness on the march
Our hospital day holds so much sober starch
Emergencies, crises, predicaments, plights
Routines and complexities - seldom delights.

But, babies are blessed, the elderly, sweet
We wash them, regardless, from crown to the feet
We've pampered, protected, persuaded, cajoled,
And wheedled and charmed both the young and the old.

With patience we practice salubrious skills
Assisting and aiding the ailing and ill
We've cuddled and coddled, injected, infused
Massaged and inuncted the battered and bruised.

Sarcoma, scotoma, no illness we fear
Systemic, pandemic, contagious, severe
Undaunted we tackle both wheezes and welts
As long as the pain is in somebody else. (1963)

Medication Aide

I peddle pills both big and small
While trudging up and down the hall
I tap your door and barge right in
And greet you with a cheery grin.

I offer headache pills or stomach
While you sit there on your hummock
I listen to your least complaint
Common ones, or maybe quaint.

Then fetch the pills prescribed to cure
I try to bring them clean and pure
Pills at night or when you waken
I'm glad I'm givin' - and not takin'.

Upon Graduation - 1963

Our achievement now is obvious
Our gratitude sincere
For progress and accomplishments
Attained throughout this year.

We're happy and excited that
This day has come at last
To take responsibility
School days are really past.

We acknowledge our indebtedness
To all the personnel
Whose patient guidance helped us
To learn our lessons well.

We pledge ourselves anew today
That hence in our career
We'll help maintain and elevate
The standards set forth here.

May heaven bless us each with sense
Pray, give us wisdom, Lord
That we'll do honor to our school
When we assail State Board.

Retirement Home

The freezer here buzzes, it hums and it drones
The furniture catches the cadence and tones
The clicking and ticking could be a distraction
But I try to deem each trait an attraction.

Strange little murmurings, snapping in walls
Curious rhythms occurring in halls
The Otis lift broadcasts its own cryptic rune
Akin to a riddle - almost a tune.

Air coolers rattle, vibrate and purr
I cannot decide which sounds I prefer
I prize the calm quiet of my big old house
Should oxygen normally sound like a mouse?

Poltergeist, poltergeist, leave me in peace
Such as I 'visioned when signing my lease
Remind all the others formerly here
To please settle down or just disappear. (1995)

Scott and White Clinic

You walk the endless halls
Then wait till someone calls.

Your packet shows your route
You hope you'll soon get out.

You breathe when you are told
Unless you're put on "hold".

You tinkle on demand
Unless it's ordered canned.

Then when you've told your story
You feel you're old and hoary.

Still, hope remains eternal -

SO FIX MY SORE INTERNAL!

Dear Doctor:

Please, and pretty please
No Rx for my pain!
I promise I will not cry out
Nor yet again complain.

However, if I needed one
If I could hide my pride,
I'm hindered by the lock-top jar
With all the pills inside. (1996)

New Camper - First Trip

Major happy camping
As you wend along your way.
Many happy memories
Closing every day!

Major happy miles
On the way to there from here.
Many lovely smiles
Throughout a major year.

Many happy hours
Through rain or sunny miles.
Major stark surprise
Every little while.

Enjoy a great adventure
All along the way.
It's my time for envy
And scribbling every day. (1996)

Cataract State

The Texas sun is plentiful
Shining far and wide
In time, we know its influence
Can fairly tan our hide.

In generous good measure
It gives us cataracts
We've been told so often
By now we know the facts.

Often we seek surgery
To brighten up our vision
And anxiously we wait our turn
For a surgical incision.

My right eye got an opening
Shaped like a map of Texas
Left eye sulked and turned away
Why should that perplex us?

Now, in a kinder, gentler key
To maintain our integrity
And limit animosity
Perhaps a map of Tennessee? (1996)

Getting Along

He never takes liquor
Her family gets drunk.
His language is clean-spoken
Not that he lacks spunk.

When taken aback
She shoots him a glance.
She gives him no slack
While waiting his chance.

If looks could cause bruising
They both would turn blue.
Is this battle their choosing
Or must each out-do?

Soon, in seclusion
Consensus is found.
They return to calm pleasantry
They rally, rebound.

Two peas in a pod
Where, for personal growth
There must be such crowding
But, please, without oaths!

Taking a Risk

I casually forgot your name
I beg to be forgiven.
In retrospect, recalling it
Could influence my livin'.

Imagine what could happen
If I accept your candy
And promise of a future
Where everything is dandy.

But, if that fine exterior
Is hiding selfish wiles
The brevity of my future
Could end my happy smiles.

I risk what future still remains
By rolling down my window
Without a risk, I will remain
A tired and lonely widow.

Awaiting Lens Correction

Clouds and sunshine fill our days
A bird still sings.
Rain may cause some slight delays
Or better things.

Although I stumble, trip, or fall
Sunshine bounces off the wall.

I rest and close my eyes to light
Yet breezes fill my room at night.
I grope and feel my way around
Honey-suckle blooms abound.
I close my eyes and take a bite
My cream cone is a sure delight.

A satin pillow rests my head
A cozy blanket warms my bed.

Remembering my former days
My heart takes wings.
Imagining tomorrow's ways
My spirit sings.

The Season (free-form)

The season nears (importance of sentiment)
As days and weeks go by.
Time selects its pace and proceeds
Inexorably toward the great event.
Weather becomes demanding and without promise.

The season is honored or ignored
Take your choice.
Memories and traditions intrude,
Enhance the days
Simple, or extravagant
Take your choice.

Magnanimity takes charge
Secrecy presides
Wealth and safety become secondary
Until, suddenly
The tree is stripped
The feast is finished
We all face our new debts, and
The angel goes home to
Her cotton-lined box
In the attic. (1997)

Haste

Be quick to restart my failing heart
Take measures to help me inhale
If I should convulse, check on my pulse
Try not to miss a detail.

Add pressure wherever I bleed
If I should look pale,
Or otherwise frail
Make efforts to stop it with speed.

If choking, remove what impedes
Restore me to vigor
Avoiding a rigor
Just try to foresee all my needs.

Revive me in case I should swoon
Inject if you must,
To make me robust
First checking to prove I'm immune.

I come to the fate that haste might create
I have but one worry -
You'll be in a hurry
And bury me somewhat too soon!

Swim Group

Silver-haired seniors
Among whom I'm counted
Have many conditions
That can be surmounted.
A moribund group
With problems galore
Count on smooth action
To mend and restore.
Removing the stiffness
From arthritic points
Restoring hips, knees,
Or various joints.
Impelled by the cadence
Of rhythms and song
Designed just to keep us
Moving along.
Day after day
Week after week
Our numbers keep coming
It's progress we seek.
So women in swimmin'
And ladies in wading
Continue relentlessly
Hope never fading. (1997)

--

Swimmin' women are ladies in wading.

--

Lost Friends

My friends and my acquaintances
Are prone to disappear
Without goodbye or fare-thee-well
They're just no longer here.

No poignant resignation
No please, or by-your-leave
Lonely separation
No special time to grieve.

No civil invitation
To come and say goodbye
Friendship's termination
Is enough to make me cry.

To Bryan

For weeks and weeks
I've planned this day
But haven't yet
Learned what to say.
Why does your work
Enhance my pride?
Who knows? but still
I can decide
To help you
As you take more schooling.

My offer's real
I am not fooling.
I mean to help you
Pay the bills,
Deposits, costs,
Whatever's due
Until you demonstrate
Your skills
And your sheepskin
Comes into view.

We do not want
A dilettante
But a serious man
Of science.
A steady mind
No heady kind
On whom we'll build
Reliance. (1998)

Two Too in the Wrong

Two sheepish people
On our ship of state
Too deep in lies to steer it straight.

Two sleazy people
Under one quilt
Too deep in blame to hide their guilt.

Two shameless people
Self-centered pair
Too deep in arrogance to care.

Two sordid people
Thinking they are bright
Offering two wrongs to make a right.

Two slippery people
Speaking tongue-in-cheek
Declare themselves to be both wise and meek.

Two sultry people
Trying to look brave
Too deep in lewdness to behave. (1998)

The Garden

Our pansies show collective grace
Each neat, precisely in its place.
Begonias blend their bursting buds
White as snow or red as blood.
Pretty portulaca's plight
It feeds a squirrel's appetite.
Verbenas, varied, hug the ground
Where the ladybug is found.
Gardenias, all a single hue
A princess and her retinue.
Then comes winter's frosty breath
Committing some to certain death
But leaving seeds or rooted pledge
In the soil beneath a hedge.
Charming beds our eyes engage
And now the garden's on this page.

Advice Aplenty!

Build a house of wisdom
With garden filled with joy
Befriend your wife and children
Every girl and boy.

Let patience glow with comfort
Through life, however long
Practice moderation
Righting every wrong.

Aim to conquer ignorance
Eschew the hurtful word
Try to be informed and "hep"
While skirting the absurd.

Call no man your master
Plot no jokes or prank
Avoiding most excesses
Contrive to pull no rank.

Inflict no harm on friend or foe
Display not everything you know. (1998)

Anomia

I know just what I need to say
But can't spit out the words
They hide inside my troubled head
And huddle there in herds.

"I'll substitute another phrase"
I think, but that phrase fails me
My tangled brain betrays itself
Revealing what assails me. (1998)

Goodbye to Ruth Jones

My mind is in turmoil
My nerves are on edge
This treatment's unfair
A most would allege.

My rest is uneasy
I'm shocked and I'm scared
Abject consternation
Just can't be compared!

Like all of the neighbors
I'm living among
I've just been evicted
And we're no longer young!

Ants

Hundreds of ants in my kitchen sink
Surprised me one morning. What should I think?
Coming through tiny crack and chink
Marching in line, each living link.

Over and under each other they tramp
Across the stove they scurry and scamp.
Back and forth to where they encamp
I mean to discourage their shuffling stamp.

Dashing along the drain board, up to the window sill
Seeking their objective with military skill
In and out of my cupboards, they hesitate, then mill
I will, quite impolitely, disrupt their little drill.

They thrive in tiny spaces
They leave no tracks or traces
Nor show their little faces
They just keep up their paces.

Little races taking place
At once in two directions
Boldly, bravely, "in my face"
And not without detection.

Like chain gangs, all with even pace
Designed for my inspection
The rascals move from place to place
An animate connection.

I try to break their secret code
At least disrupt their data mode
Intrude upon their usual road
Attempt to find their dank abode.

When I wipe them all away
They reappear in great array
Reincarnated every day
No stupid animals are they!

Business as usual at night
At any hour I join the fight
Display my greater strength and might
Temporarily, they take flight.

Their numbers are diminished, true
But here and there, I see a few
Wandering, dazed, without a clue
Of where or when to rendezvous.

Resigned to start each morn's assault
I daily try to call a halt.
I have no feelings of default
Guarding my sugar and my salt.

One little ant in my garage
Can't evade my broom's barrage
Sweeping him from his safe menage.

Timid, trusting, tiny bug
Busy, purposeful, and smug
Stay out of my honey jug
Or face again my noxious DRUG! (1993)

If (with apologies)

If you can find a pin when buttons vanish,
Or, failing this, a needle and a thread;
And quickly bring the ice, the pain to banish,
When little Johnnie falls, and bumps his head;

If you can feed the family on Sunday
A nourishing and mineral-balanced feast,
And do the wash and ironing on Monday
Without complaint, not tiring the least;

If you can mend a kite, remove a splinter,
De-flea the pup that followed Junior home,
And know why nights are longer in the winter,
Explain cocoons; locate the hidden comb,

Can sacrifice your sleep to nurse the ailing,
Can answer abstract questions with a fact,
Prognosticate the weather without failing
And entertain the T.V. crowd with tact.

If you can keep the toys all off the stairways
And sit through weekly Western double features,
Endure confusion that pervades the air ways,
Compete in popularity with teachers;

If you can lend and give, but never borrow,
And brush and clean and wear last season's hats,
Conceal your tears, disguising every sorrow,
And calmly referee fraternal spats.

If you can watch your offspring trip and stumble
And fall and rise again, and smile through pain
While stoically you stay your hand, nor mumble
Whatever harsh abrasions he sustains.

If you can face tomorrow without worry
And meet the future for each one serene,
And find the time to read a bedtime story
And tell the toes of each wee foot tucked in -

Yours is the fate of almost any mother
If you can claim a routine such as this
And this reward surpasses any other -
Your baby's awkward hug and sticky kiss.

The Frenzy Family

I found the Frenzy family
As I ventured forth at dawn
Filing from a fissure
Trailing toward the lawn.

Fickle Freddie Frenzy
Followed Frantic Frawd
After Freakish Frieda
Who offended Manic Maude.

This was no flight from freedom
Nor fearful fast retreat -
Just one safari finished
Only to repeat.

This fractious Frenzy family
At whom I like to gawk
Goes to and from their barracks
A frequent fruitful walk.

I fancy Father Frenzy tries
To put each one at ease
While calmly ascertaining
Where he had left his keys. (1995)

Ice Storm

Each twig was sheathed in glistening glass
The sheen of silver on shafts of grass.
The shinnery shivered, all shiny and bright
Each shanty wore shawls of sparkling light.
Splendid sharp shards on shaggy trees
Shimmied and shuddered in the breeze.
A blinding glare, a glittering glow
Of a lot of ice and a little snow.
Acres of diamonds on every side
Like a shimmering sea or a dazzling bride.
The showy scene, the shining glare
Like frosty jewels everywhere.
No sliver escaped its shroud of ice
Now it's gone, but wasn't it nice?

In a Restaurant

I was sitting in a restaurant
Proper and sedate
As usual, ate everything
I had upon my plate.
I ordered figgy pudding
And thought the brush could wait.

I have an awful toothache
Behind my upper plate.
I ask myself quite silently,
"When will this pain abate?"
I answer, also quietly,
"It must be what I ate." (1996)

If You Want My Company, Scratch My Back

I'll brook no aspersions, No animadversions	Contrive commendation, Produce approbation,
I'll countenance none of your sass, Censorious slander, Or vain reprimander.	Ascribe some extravagant grace, Or, wherever you go, You may as well know,
No critical chiding will pass.	I am staying away from that place.

Daily Routine

I wake up in the morning, and rub my sleepy eyes.
I find the clock, and estimate the time I must arise.
I yawn, and stretch my weary bones, and think of exercise.

I contemplate the weather and marvel that it's dark
And wonder what could irritate that dog who starts to bark.
As blood begins to circulate, I wash off all the cark.

First thing in the morning, I gently try each door
To vindicate my failure to check the night before.
I drop my key and hesitate - I cannot reach the floor.

I spray the kitchen air again and start a ceiling fan
Because the water boiled dry and ruined one more pan.
I'm planning to initiate cold breakfasts if I can.

A few soap operas later when the sun is going down
I'll fix my mind on sleeping, and don my well-worn gown.
It's how I most appreciate the quiet of this town.

I wake up in the morning and rub my sleepy eyes
I find the clock

St. Jo Island

I picked up a shell with a clam inside
Also one where a crab could hide.
I gently put them with angel wings
Sand dollars, barnacles, and things
And carried them off in a plastic sack
And boarded the ferry and took them back
To the family home, where we carefully rinsed
And took them aboard the car where I winced
When I noticed some very unusual smells
From the sack with the vacant and clean bag of shells.

When I couldn't find the source of my grief
I folded the bag and looked for relief
In packing and hiding the bag underneath
The luggage and kids, but when we were done
The smells had escaped, the result was no fun.
With bleaches and soaps, I washed them and soaked
But, still the air wasn't as sweet as I'd hoped.
I've decided to bury the offensive things
And hope that the perfume will no longer cling.

Super Market Confusion

I go to the market for something for lunch
Soon to return with grapes in a bunch.

I search through the shelves, choices are many
I find what I need, or go without any.

Exotic concoctions I pass on the run
Six kinds of bananas? I need only one.

Large boxes, less in them, in no way appeal
Get on the ball, please - and offer a deal!

How many kinds of potato chips are there?
When I find the old-fashioned, I never look farther.

Too many choices confuse more and more.
So throw out the top shelf and clean up the floor.

If you want the busiest market in town
Cut out the improvements, and bring the costs down.

No Driving

"I'm so confused" was my complaint,
Molly saw me about to faint.
Sarah was called
She wheeled me to the new E.R. -
Not the end of things, by far.

I woke up on the seventh floor
Of Collier Wing - and what is more,
Their pictures showed a likely source
Of what was ailing this old horse.

"No doubt you've had a little stroke,
Your driving, we, of course, revoke."
"Says you!" I thought. "I go to swim!
You can't deny that on a whim."

Through foggy days I lived and stewed
Working up an awful mood
Worse pictures of my stark old age
I can't imagine. I'm enraged!

But Martha spoke to save the day
And this is what I heard her say:
"I will take you to and fro
And elsewhere when you need to go
In these hard times I'll see you through
Why? 'Cause that's what
Daughters Do." (1997)

What Daughters Do

"What daughters do" has come to mean
Varieties of things
In many ways, when pain is keen
The worst that fate can bring.

When any disabilities
Reduce my self-assurance
When loss of my agility
Replaces my endurance.

When my feet ignore commands
And clumsiness befalls my hands
I ache in all my bones and glands
I'll call for help within the clan.

Seeing this, a daughter comes
Dependable and kind
To offer calm and solace
And gentle peace of mind.

Eager help is proffered
My abilities are few
There's frequent opportunity
To Do What Daughters Do! (1998)

A Helping Hand

This silver-haired dowager
Direly distressed
Hailed a likely passer-by
Who seemed to be well-dressed.

Understandingly enough
This manly modern knight
Made the needed phone calls
To solve the problem right.

He called upon a daughter
He knew what daughters do
Then about his way he went
Convinced the helping hand he sent
Was capable and true. (1998)

To Sarah

You like to sing just like a bird
Breaking out in song
Practicing deep breathing
The whole day long.
You flit about as though on wings
A canary when you sing.

So - I eat just "like a bird" - ?
You're absolutely right.
I swallow, swallow, swallow
All day and half the night.

Ah, but Martha bests us both.
She's as happy as a lark.

Evicted!

My appetite has vanished
My strength is on the wane
I feel as though my energies
May not return again.

My judgements are invalid
My tired brain deceives me
I don't understand me
No wonder none believes me.

I fear ahead are pitfalls
Of which I'm unaware
I wish that I could waken
From this terrible nightmare

To feel so sad and lonely
No matter what I do
This optimist can scarce believe
The skies are really blue. (1998)

Clinton's Mistake

"I made a mistake, I made a mistake!"

"Tell me, kind sir - what mistake did you make?
While trying to prove that he is the rake,
You think Ken Starr should jump in the lake.
Obvious truths you deem to be fake."

"But whatever I do is done by the book
I thought that you knew, I am not a crook.
My little mistakes you should overlook."

"I think, Mr. Clinton, that you take the cake.
I say, Mr. Clinton, you are a mistake!" (1998)

Willy, Willy, Don't Be Silly

What ridiculous things you put forth as fact!
You "deeply regret" being caught in the act -

Your head has been turned by skirts and by lace
Your lies are as plain as the nose on your face.

Don't change your story, just change your ways
And one day you'll learn deceit never pays

Give up the game, take off the hat
You must be tired of being laughed at.

Do "what you have to" the screws have been turned.
You've been playing with fire -
That's how you got burned! (1998)

To William Jefferson Clinton, Esq.

There's a cancer on this presidency
It happened during your residency
No more delays or hesitancy.

The American people are hard to please
Perhaps it would help to get on your knees
It can't be evaded with a trip overseas.

We want you to feel our abject shame
No light-hearted jokes or shifting of blame
Jokes and repentance are not the same.

You can't get by with acting the part
It must appear to come from the heart
You reap the result of whatever you start! (1998)

Monica

Monica, Monica,
How do you do?
I do as I please, sir.
How about you?

Monica, Monica,
Give us a reason.
'Cause that's who I am, sir.
Do I commit treason?

Aptitude

What wondrous force has aptitude
While lending authority to prestige.
It reveals itself in gratitude.

The Frugal Life

I hate to see things wasted
That someone else might need
I hate pure ostentation
And wanton waste and greed.

Frugality has been my life
Throughout my many years
A rule of thumb was "use it
Until it disappears."

Of all good fortunes of my life
The greatest boon as I'm aware,
The years of poverty for me
Have given way to Medicare.

No more am I resilient
As in my youthful years.
Resources now at my command
Combat those latent fears.

I now may choose three meals a day
And all my medications,
But not too many cruises
Or I might have complications. (1999)

Correction Fluid

Something funny happened
As I made my record here
Of verses and remembrances
Of old things I find dear.

I put a bit of Clorox
Into a tiny jar
And used a pick to bleach out
Every mark that seemed to mar.

Early on the morrow
As authors like to say
I looked and found my toothpick
Eaten half away.

Creative Block (and Tackle)

My muse has left me stranded
My trusty pen is still
But only temporarily -
I'll fall back on my skill.

And when the spirit moves me
I will have much to say
My fertile brain won't fail me
But might lead me astray.

--

My stack of ideas, thoughts and surmises
Grows every day - the pile just rises.

--

My muse is working overtime
My pen's in highest gear

At this rate I will soon be at
The height of my career. (1996)

Worthwhile Written Works

Written works, to be worthwhile
Should educate or raise a smile.
Must be appealing, entertain,
Stimulate, or tax the brain
Maintaining brevity and style.

Ideas

Dreams and impressions
Are fashioned and grow
Published where any
Can find them and know
The author had brains
He delighted to use,
The reader finds notions
Concepts and views.

Can't Reach My Shoe

What ever am I going to do?
No longer can I reach my shoe.
Wouldn't it be really neat
To have a brand new pair of feet
With shoes already painted on
And nails that never grow too long?

The Golden Years

The shadows seem to lengthen
The golden years are here.
Most of my acquaintances
Appear to disappear.

I owe a lot of gratitude
To competent physicians.
Especially for their attitude
Concerning my condition.

There was a day when competence
Was measured by my deeds
Today, I can but vocalize
Concerning all my needs.

The Character of Tyranny

To live by the law of vengeance
Is to die, the result of hate.
An eye for an eye, by nature spawns
The urge to retaliate.

Callous provocation
Promotes a wish to kill
The attitude of "tit-for-tat"
Cultivates ill-will.

For violence, pain, and cruelty
Reap vigilance, fear, and sorrow.
The venom of today begets
The despots of tomorrow.

Christmas Program

Merry Christmas!

A brass band boomed acclaim and anthems rang
In vespers, psalms, and glorious praise they sang.
So foreign to my ears, the pomp and power.
Impressive service held at any hour
Beautiful, sensual, enchanting, and gay
I hadn't thought I'd live to see the day.

Hesitation (El Niño)

After three years of dreadful drought
Come two of torrents and floods.
Choose dirty, dusty winds to breathe
Or drown in dirt and mud.
Farmers who've chosen this row to hoe
Decide to stay, or choose to go.

When I'm Done with My Body

My body, when dead, I'll be done with.
I leave it to your loving care.
You may bury it, burn it, or hang it
Because I will not be there.

Carve from it parts that for others
Might bring them reprieve or relief.
Don't let the matter distress you
But perhaps assuage your grief.

But, if you should deem it useful
That I be mummified,
It will not bother me at all
By then I shall have died.

After all, it's only a body
Which I have already worn out
And, in my final judgement
That's not what life is about. (1996)

Growing Confusion

I assail my cluttered memos
Expecting them to inspire
Then get off on a tangent
Subsequently I retire.

The result is - I leave behind me
More notes than ever I've used.
The pile of waste generated
May leave my message bemused. (1996)

Growing Confusion (edited)

Cluttered memos I assail
Expecting inspiration
Disorganized, I turn the page
And meet with consternation.
Then find that I have left behind
More notes than I have used
Unfinished "good ideas"
I'm mentally bemused. (1998)

Running an Errand

I'd back into my parking place
Do it exactly right
If my eyes grew behind me
Or my head weren't on too tight.

I'd quickly start my trusty car
Directly back it out
Signal at the street before
I recall what this trip's about.

Watch that Car

Watch that car!
He's going slow
Just don't know
Which way to go.

Is he blind
Or is he not?
Just trying to find
A parking spot! (1996)

The Worthiness of Character

One may demand respect; however
Who will respect the demand?
True worth must first be proven
Then we'll understand.

To command respect takes credentials
Written or by reputation
Noised abroad, or confidential
A true discrimination.

-=-

Alligators demand respect.

-=-

To demand respect is an exercise in futility.

-=-

Respect

To command respect requires dignity.
To show respect is to esteem with courtesy.
Due respect is earned by polite comportment.
To show respect inspires respect. (1996)

Ambition

I may in time be proven wrong
But, whether my life be short or long
I'd rather be dead, gone, forgotten
Than live to be useless, vile, and rotten.

Through the Century

Early in this century
Few advantages were there
We watched them burgeon and emerge
Almost everywhere.

Unheard-of then were radios
Electric lights or phones
Now we deal with robots
Remote controls and clones.

When You Miss It

You never miss the water
Till the well runs dry.
You never miss your vision
As long as you can see.

How often have we wondered
And questioned Why?

Don't ask me!

Reading Poetry Aloud

Romp through the verses
Tango with the rhymes
Give a lilt to syllables
Pause tactfully at times.

Stress important portions
As the words progress,
On basis of completeness
Finish with finesse. (1996)

A Glowing Message

The poetry of earth is never dead. (Keats)
It must be made to vibrate when it's read.
By labor, fashioned into polished thought
A glowing message never comes to naught. (1996)

Bob Klem -

Red blood from the Poet's pen
Flecks the fey on tundred fen.
Poetic gods do not intend
It perish, ever.

--

True poetry will never die
But, cherished, it will edify.

--

Making Rhymes

I'm making rhymes
'most all the time
I seldom lack for rhythm.

I never cease
To speak my piece
If I'm against or with 'em.

Postcard poetry and
Sundry verse
Is offered as a blessing
Accepted as a curse.

Hardest to See

Gradually I'm going blind
I grope my way around, and yet
The hardest thing for me to find:
An invisible hair net.

Garden Improvements

Our garden's been improved upon
To emphasize its beauty.
Imperfect specimens are gone
The gardeners know their duty.

"Colas" (Cost Of Living Allowances)

The fallacy of fairness
Dispensed percentage-wise
And insurance that pays off
Only when one dies
Are a lifelong disenchantment
For any, one and all,
Who suffer disappointments
And whose income remains small.

Eighty Years

Eighty years
On these two feet.
In all these days
I've yet to meet
Any sorrow I'd call sweet. (1996)

Melon

My knife sliced through that melon
Like 'twas made of melted grease
And into skin and muscle
Of the finger underneath.

Not the measure of my vigor
Nor the sharpness of my knife
Merely that I relish melon -
One high-ranking joy of life!

Too Many Helpers

Too many cooks may spoil the broth
Is an axiom oft' repeated.
Too many helpers may make one wroth
And chief chef left defeated. (1996)

Dieting

Eat your dinner slowly
Swallow at least twice
Every time your fork or spoon
Delivers something nice.

Loving Life

The love of your life
Should be your wife.
The love of life
Is better than a wife.

Manufactured Luck

Our worries are over!
Our troubles are over!
Someone has cloned
The four-leafed clover!

Just Imagine

There is a time when apple trees
Seem to give a giant sneeze
Releasing petals in the breeze.

Dry leaves lying on the lawn
Scamper for shelter when we run.

When squirrels cross the traffic lane
Let chaparrals run through your brain.

When winter-withered leaves blow by
Someone sees a butterfly.

--

Imagine MOM upside-down - WOW! (1996)

--

Beautiful Words

We cherish thoughts of kindness
We've gleaned throughout a day
And lest they be forgotten
Rehearse them when we pray.

Beautiful words, like beautiful flowers
Garnered on fruitful days
We save to brighten up our hours
With blossoms, or a phrase. (1996)

Birds Will Sing

Birds will sing as though it's spring
As long as the sun is shining.
A cat will wait till the chicks emerge
And then begin his dining.
Birds will sing - the fact is plain.
But who has heard one, singing in the rain? (1996)

--

Old age, by definition is
A moribund condition. (1997)

--

Babies

There's a world full of babies.
Both healthy and ill
Who cause joys and worries
Like nothing else will. (1996)

Political Parties

Violent and unscrupulous,
They call themselves "militias".
Menacing and infamous,
They might be called "malicious". (1996)

Paradise Lost

My life is marked by sadness,
Frequent and repeated.
My address book is obsolete
Decrepit and depleted. (1996)

Life Is Short

Life's too short to be spent
Recouping my mistakes.
I'm going to get it right this time
No matter what it takes.

Memory Loss

I'm losing things more rapidly
Than any time before.
I've just about decided
It's time to lock my door.

Once I've hunted everywhere
And find they've been replaced.
If I have been complaining
Already, I'm disgraced.

Parade

Let the leader prance
See his baton dance
To show who's in command.
No baritones, no xylophones,
Give me a marching band! (1996)

Stripes

By his stripes you shall know him!
One earns his stripes of sundry sort
Correction, tribute, drama
The stripes on sleeves of uniforms
Or all-out striped pajamas.

Hugging

Hugging should be a two-way street
Reserved for two old friends who meet.
Offered, accepted, shared, enjoyed
Not foisted on any who seem annoyed.

Turning

He signals with his steering wheel
To let you know he's turning,
Regardless of the fact that now
The other blinker's burning.

Lower Case in Proper Nouns

Learn this little lesson
And learn this lesson well
Never write my name again
Without a capital "L".

Also learn, I beg you
Lesson number two
Don't omit the little "i"
Another small taboo.

Louise

While I'm Alive

While I'm alive, I must maintain
Such vibrant bloom and glow
That when I'm finished on this earth
Assuredly, you'll know.

No painted smile, no powdered blush
Our social customs, now.
I'll just maintain my happy grin
Until my final bow.

Contributing

Perhaps I may,
I know I should,
Contribute to
The common good.

Avoiding and Improving

By avoiding misdemeanor
Avoid incarceration.
With sympathy and kindness
Improve the entire nation!

My Permanent

I have a brand-new permanent
A fizzy-fuzzy "do"
A virtual Phyllis-diller
Its benefits are few.

My brittle stand-up permanent
Makes of me a Chico Marx
I corral it in a hairnet
And avoid the windy parks.

Each day my permanent and I
Take to the swimming pool
I bridle its contumely way
To spare me ridicule.

Let Me Be There

In weather either foul or fair
In chilling wind or balmy air
However changeable or rare
Let me be there.

Among my fellows lame or blind
Whatever lot I be assigned
Up in front, or far behind
Let me be kind.

Whether far away or near
Anywhere upon this sphere
With the folks I hold most dear
Let me be here. (1997)

One of the Few

Of the few good men
I'd like to be one
To see the world
And have some fun.

To keep the peace
And learn a trade
Then, surely I would
"Have it made".

Then after I had
Done my time
I'd go to school
--Be in my prime
--Learn to rhyme?

No Smoking

I'll survive a limb's amputation
I can grow a new head of hair
Rebuild a poor reputation
But, please don't sully my air.

(Second try)

Abuse your own body
And I will not care.
Disgrace your upbringing
As much as you dare.
Befoul your language
If you think it's fair.
But what gives you license
To sully my air?
Keep your tobacco smoke
Out of my hair!

A Mother

A mother means to me
All that's bright and pure and free.
Her smiles, fair
Her kisses, rare
Mean all the world to me.

Mother is perfect in
Her children's eyes.
And my mother's perfection
Shows up in her pies! (1928, 1930)

Reviewing the Past

I welcome the nights
When in dreams I move faster
I fly up the stairs
And zoom past disaster.

By day I go limping
Along with my walker
Or sit by TV
And become a mere gawker.

At night I review
Events from the past
It always ends well
Success comes at last.

Beating the Odds

I have been told I should be dead
They call it actuarial.
Resisting, still, I keep my head
I call it necessarial.

New Yorker Cartoon

I appreciate wry humor
'Though politically incorrect
But in the public library
They're not what I'd expect.

"But when," you might ask solemnly
"Was there a quiet time
Still enough to motivate
Your clever little rhyme?"

I Will Not Be Obese

Deliver me from corpulence
I will not be obese.

Let all the fatty livers
Be in portly geese. (1998)

To Martha - doer of good deeds

These are things that daughters do
More than just the vital few:

Sometimes offer to drive or fetch
Knowing patience will have to stretch.

Give a bit of precious time
To telephone or read a rhyme.

Hang a picture, find a plumber
Repair mistakes, dumb or dumber.

Make suggestions to be repeated
Ignore remarks that seem conceited.

Offer husband's savoir faire
When there's more than you can bear.

Make the toilet fit my seat
Deeds like these just can't be beat! (1998)

"Assisted Living"

Today's "assisted living"
Has no appeal for me.
It's less - much less - than glamorous
"Spare me" is my plea.
Although I'm thinking slowly now
It's plain as it can be:
Given the choice to use my voice
I'd take the hanging tree. (1998)

Energy Conscious

Harness the winds,
the sun, the tides
Find energy everywhere
Energy hides.

Spare a resource
Before it's depleted
Mistakes will be made
Let none be repeated.

Try Moderation, Not Regulation

I do not need the White House
To tell me I'm obese
Nor other useless info
That they choose to release.

I have a small spare tire
That I'd be glad to shed
But regulations measure
Just height and weight and spread.

Defining hypertension
Is none of their concern
Why don't they measure competence
And watch the Congress burn?

It's not my generation
Who most exceed their diet.
Moderation is the key
And more of us should try it.

Miscellaneous Limericks

Magnificent blooms of seen flowers
Present their big blooms to the showers
Doing their best
To turn to the west
Although it's been raining for hours.

-=-

West Kansas is known for miasma
It threatens to curdle my plasma
The gas is too thick
To stir with a stick
And it does nothing good for my asthma.

-=-

I watch my nutrition intently
I work out with rhythm, but gently
When I mature
And if you concur
I'll continue to live opulently.

-=-

Wild flowers, varied, abundant
Grow freely, but mostly redundant
At home, I exclaim
And try to explain
My descriptions all wax orotundant.

I Chose to Study Nursing

When first I ventured from my home
To seek an occupation,
I signed on at the "State School"
And here's my observation:

Starting out at five A.M.
Every single day
We hose our "students" stem to stern
While on a slab they lay.

A student from a nearby ward
Carried them to and fro.
The experience had its toll on him
You might expect to know.

He grumbled loud and mumbled long
It fell on heedless ears.
He missed no opportunity
To tell how many years.

Then when occasion once arose
He took his own poor life.
To change my course, at once I chose
To get another life.

Hot and Dry

August weather is hot and dry
Billowing clouds float on high
The rain crow calls in the morning sky
When did the rain crow learn to lie?

A few drops here, a sprinkle there
But none where his song fills the air
The lawn is getting brown and bare
Maybe his voice is but a prayer. (1999)

The Terrible Ninety-Twos

Beware the terrible twos
Is a warning you have heard.

Beware the ninety-twos!
It's time you got the word.

In the start and at the end of life
We toddle around creating strife.

Proclamations of Immaturity

Rings on their fingers
And paint on their toes
Gold on the eyebrows
And stuck through the nose.
Rings on the ears and navel are hung
And places imagined by only the young.
Chains on ankles and 'round every neck
The mere contemplation could make me a wreck.
My dignity rankles.
 What's left to expect?

Good Grammar

I beg you and I plead with you
To watch your English diction.
The value of good grammar -
Is my own predilection.

This laid-back age, I don't dispute
Not much communication.
How does our attitude compute
With those of other nations?

Salud

I'm glad to have my body whole
I'm glad for peace within my soul.

I need to strive to stay real well
But little things may ring my bell.

Although my kids don't call enough
They never try me with their "stuff".

There's dozens of ailments I've never had
And those I had were not too bad.

A "second opinion" is all I ask
But I could use a younger mask.

Asked for Help

Someone asked a favor of me
 And my heart soared!
Not since nineteen ninety-three
 Had anyone asked for help from me
 And I've been bored.

The Celestial Chorus Sings

No matter when our death knell rings
Come, it must, to knaves or kings.
We're occupied with mundane things
While the celestial chorus sings.

We weave our tangled world-wide web
While temporal life begins to ebb.
We'll leave a car in each garage,
A mouse in every house.

Salesmen

We're crowning in excesses now
Of almost any kind
The choices that are offered
Simply blow my mind.

Where has the role of salesman gone?
They're in the parking lot
Where they can sell the gullible
Anything they've got! (1999)

Short-term Memory

I made a funny, catchy rhyme
I thought it ought to glow in time
But when I poised my pen to pad
It lost all life it ever had.

Mail

The postman comes. I pray for mail
He surprised me with a packet
So big it held nine postage stamps
On its beautiful brown jacket.

Proliferation

Nothing promotes proliferation
Quite as much as publication.

I Answer to None

My way of life, in great degree
Is free from care as it can be.
Except for laws, I answer to none
My time's my own; I do what gets done.
I eat what I cook and cook what I please
What I don't eat gets put in deep freeze.
Few demands are made of me
I've no responsibility
But with foreboding and misgiving
To avoid "assisted living".

Caring for Me

I wield a mean broom
In spite of the gloom
Resulting when muscles rebel.

My sidewalks don't shine
But these rooms of mine
Are clean, as best I can tell.

I merit a raise
I can do without praise
But the jobs I perform I can't shirk.

Caring for me
As any can see
Is arduous, difficult work. (1999)

Ants, Again! "Off" Again

Ants have invaded my private domain
In numbers I dread to see again.

Up and down the telephone wire
These little rascals never retire.

I welcome them with my noxious spray
Urging them to stay away.

I move, and behold, the ants move too
They like me more than most folks do.

They seem to like to congregate
Under a bottle or cup or plate.
Perhaps it's there they choose to mate. (1999)

Growing Season

The old mesquites are leafing out
Hurrah, now spring is here
Gardens are up and in full sprout
Summer must be near.

Hyacinths have come and gone
Daffodils have had their day
Mowers are busy on the lawn
What more can one say? (1999)

Change

"You never miss the water"
The ancient saying goes
'Til you're a "displaced person"
I timidly suppose.

You never miss the water
'Til you're rudely moved around
Where nothing new seems normal
Though amenities abound.

The change is for the better
(If normal can't be worse)
But generally speaking,
Most changes are adverse.

Bear up, my little children
Accept what you can't change
Make do - it's temporary
Soon things will rearrange. (1999)

Weary

I am weary as weary can be
I feel like a cat up a tree
Afraid to climb up or fall down.

My arms and my legs are both tired
As though in deep mud I were mired
At resting, I'm best in this town.

I'm planning to see the M.D.'s
Perhaps they can give me some ease
Before in self-pity I drown

I think I'll drink grape juice, perhaps
Lest I take two steps and just collapse
Then I'll crawl into my gown. (1999)

Our Impeached Leader

Our august and dignified Senate
In their sober and serious fashion
Returned the reins of our country
With their usual prudent compassion
To our exposed and impeached dear leader
A dishonest, bold-faced deceiver
Who riddled our lives and his reputation
Earning disfavor in most of the nation.
Enjoying the charm of dishonor and fame
Steadfastly denying all sense of shame
He cuts a fine figure, refuting all blame
And has earned our disgust - his game is so lame. (1999)

-=-

Pillory Hillary!

-=-

Deceived

Too bad,
so sad,
been had!

-=-

"Where the truth lies -"

Poetry Characterized (copied from a dictionary)

Poetry is characterized by meaning, sound, and rhythm.
Without the rhyme and rhythm
There's little meaning in 'em.

Muddy-Pawed Cat

I'd be happy with things the way that they are
If no muddy-pawed cat walked the length of my car.

Prayer

Give us this day our daily pills
Prescribed for our assorted ills
Provide some water, food, and beds
To fill our tummies, rest our heads
Protect us from inclement weather
With blankets that are light as feathers
Keep us safe from mischief-makers,
From many givers, and all takers.

Quaint Complaints

Digital time is a major crime
Daylight saving's a crock
Disrupting retirement habits.
Next they'll recall my clock.

It seems life's in a constant flux
Changing by the hour
Just when we've learned a routine
A change will turn it sour.

Shopping takes longer and longer
Since shelves are stocked to the sky
Such changes are not for the better
So "why," I ask you. "Why?"

Renovation, Reclamation, Reparation - YMCA

They've come and closed our pool, my friends
What varied feelings stir the heart
Our choicest pleasures meet their ends
Our closest friends obliged to part.

Our time to exercise with zest
Whichever class each one pursued
To do whatever suits one best
Has surely made for better mood.

Though grateful for the time we've had
Patience smolders, growing thin
Procrastination leaves us sad
So, OPEN THE DOORS AND LET US IN! (1999)

No Guarantee

Hand me a pretty apron
It won't cause me to work.
You know the very thought of it
Prompts me more to shirk.

To sharpen me a pencil
Won't inspire me to write.
And you could sing a lullaby
All my wakeful night.

To call me on the telephone's
No guarantee I'm home.
Stand me on the podium
I couldn't read a poem.

Don't give me a computer
There's no chance that I'd compute.
Why preach your deepest theories
Which I would but dispute?

So when I come to beg of you
To share with me your money
You've every right to answer:
"Don't even think it, honey."

My Brother's Poetry

My brother was a poet beyond the use of rhymes
He left me his emotions as beautiful as chimes.

If I had known my brother who wrote those jolly rhymes
I'd have helped correct his spelling and punctuate his lines.

Now I can read the poems of that old and lonely man
And appreciate the errors as true compassion can.

If I had known my brother when he was young and tough
I could not have defended a man so plain and rough.

But his poetry affects me as any kindred would
He best reflects my sentiments.
Now I know that he was good! (1999)

Hubble Refreshments

Hello, little Hubble
Out there in the sky
We bring reinforcements
While Earth hurtles by.

New gyroscopes have we
And computer that's new
Get back on track, now
And do what you do!

We've fixed your equipment
And tightened a screw
In this lack of atmosphere
It taxed all our thew.

With all these refreshments
Which cost us a few
We bid you God-speed
'Till our next rendezvous.

As for the accolades
To which you are due
You share with the astronauts
Who envy your view. (1999)

--

Something's always taking all the joy out of life! (Anonymous) (1999)

--

Child-proof Caps

Child-proof caps -
Bane of my existence
Seldom can I manage them
Without a child's assistance.

Incomplete instructions
In print so fine I opt
To forgo decoding it
And shelve the thing still stopped.

Full Moon

Full moon's at its height tonight
So big its orb, all burnished bright
So seldom seen: such lustrous sheen
Its brilliance glowed, enticed.
Time and again we gaped and gazed
No simple glance sufficed. (1999)

Unbought Book

I am that book that no one buys
I am a writer recording my lies
Colorful, clever, creative are they
Surpassed by few along life's way.
Twice stymied am I, spending hard time
Unpublished secluded
With many a rhyme.

You Brushed My Hair

You brushed my hair when I could not
Did essentials on the spot
Fetched and carried at beck and call
Walked me up and down the hall.

You pushed the wheel-chair to the car
Brought the service up to par
Invited me to share your home
Worked your knuckles to the bone.

With daughters doing what daughters do
Why fret that there are only two? (2000)

My Walking Wheels

If I want to do a thing or two
And think it may be taxing
I take my trusty walking wheels
To speed me toward relaxing.

Busy Y2K

It's January the second
Soon the month will be gone
It's all down hill from here on
Can we ever get it all done?

Oh! To Be a Bird!

To spend the days on the wing -
Days of light and hope and joy.
To experience nest-building, hatch babies
And teach the young to sing.
To rail at cats and squirrels
To tweak their tails, and
To cause children to laugh.

The Three Lives of Louise Dart

Chapter One

At first I was a little girl
Little and lame and lonely
Seventh of ten siblings, I
Sustained by bits and dribblings.
Almost all I did was cry
My schooling started early, and
Was rigidly pursued.
Immediately thereafter: began my ample brood.

Chapter Two

When mine were fed and clothed and schooled
I studied nursing's laws and rules
And after working twenty years
And paying taxes through my tears
I got new hips, then volunteered
To do for those who needed aid
And spent my half of what I'd made.

Chapter Three

Advanced in age, I sit and brood
With little need for man nor food
Recalling things I might have done
Extirpating one by one.
Still these latter days are fine:
The stunts I pull are only mine.
So, sober, diffident, and blunt
I gloat with pride at my last stunt. (2000)

Art the Cat

I'm changing my cat's name to "Art"
I doubt it will break the cat's heart
The strategy's fresh on my part
People will walk to see ART!

He sits by the window - upstart!
Wanting a chance to depart
A privilege I will not impart
I'm changing the cat's name to "ART". (2000)

Silence

If your word is worthless
'Twere better you were wordless!

Refrigerator Logic

I know I need never be hungry
And here's my sure-fire plan
I'll live on yesterday's surplus
Adding just one more can. (2000)

Edify vs. Stultify

A scholarly argument edifies
Bickering, squabbling, stultifies
Clothes alone can't glamorize.

Shoe Styles

How poorly do I tolerate
This year's clunky shoes
Rather would I ambulate
In size thirteen canoes.

Styles may soon have come and gone
I'll not so much as try one on
Such clumsy, awkward, bulky shoes
Are not the kind that I will choose.

Ungainly, ponderous, dull, and stout
There's one small thing I'm scared about:
This year's styles may never wear out! (2000)

Salubrious, Gratuitous Monarchs

Abruptly, in summer, there are risen
From a homely larval prison
Hosts of nature's wealth arise
Brightly, sprightly butterflies
Perpetually in exercise.

Quiet, graceful, pleasant, clean
Regal, beautiful, serene
The lovely monarch butterfly
Achieves its goal to dignify
The healing art of being seen. (2000)

AHKlem

He was honest and fair
And willing to share
Reserved and hardworking
A stranger to shirking
In silence bore pain
Not known to complain
Tireless and tough
Enough was enough

Modern Hieroglyphics

There's writing that just baffles me
Though meant as illumination
These modern hieroglyphics are
In need of some translation.
Please supply interpreters
Or English explanation!
They're in important places
But mostly on the dash.
Of the many buttons there
Which one should I mash?

A Sterling Reputation

I loaned a kid a bit of cash
Without a note - a deal that's rash.
He said "I'll pay, I'll pay, I'll pay!"
Directly, he just walked away.

I'd call him up and call him down
Because he lives right here in town.
But he might say "I paid you once
You must think that I'm a dunce".

I'd lose my chance to teach him this:
(I wouldn't want this chance to miss)
"What thing's worth the most to you?
A reputation tried and true!

"Neither of us should be without
This little thing to think about:
When next you come to get a loan
Your chance has fallen like a stone." (2000)

Dreaming

In the initial moment of waking up
At the apex of a dream
This instant of insipid life
Will at times evoke a scream.

For a period of this limbo-time
I reach out as though I'm there
Attempting to stay a catastrophe
But getting a fist-full of air.

I dream of the boredom
That a kind of sleep induces
Yet has no relation to
The emotion it produces.

We deal with ancestors, progeny, too
Then rouse in bed alone.
Such mixing of generations
Can shake me to the bone.

I dream in terms so vivid
I recall them as facts next day.
It's hard to tell truth from fiction
Experiencing both that way.

Drought

In drought the crops all wither away
No water, no harvest, a dull display
Of crops that sprout, but can't mature;
This rainless state cannot endure.

How sad to see a big brown field
How much corn can a dead stalk yield?
"There's always next year," we hear you say
But who can assume a rainy day?

And by the time we see the rain
We should have planted corn again
Who cares how low the price they pay
For crops you can't grow anyway? (2000)

Dear Travis,

It's hard for me to waste the space
Of lines between my verses
For practice, now I'll leave this page
Till my resolve reverses.

Some Houses I Have Known

A little guy named Travis
Has come into our lives,
He likes to play with flashlights
And likes to sharpen knives.

He brought me such a pretty book
I find it hard to use it,
For fear my poor handwriting
Or comic verse abuse it.

But as the years go speeding by
I feel I must be brave
And somehow start to write therein
So he'll have it to save.

Here are remembered stories of
Some houses I have known.
None of them was better than
The one you call your own.

I've lived in several houses (homes)
None of them brand-new.
I remember most of them quite well
Exceptions here are few.

The house (home) whether large or small
Got much of my attention
Details we chose to there install
Too numerous to mention.

Whenever we had well-improved
And settled in location
Behold, we up and sold and moved
To my exasperation.

And so this odyssey progressed
Mostly in small towns
That's how our zest for living grew
My whimsy still abounds.

Now I relate this tale to you
That you be not too wary
Of anything unusual
Curious, or scary.

Diverse events will mark your life
Take everything in stride
Do the best you can with it
And I will glow with pride.

Before my measured time began
There was a forest fire.
My dad cut down some damaged trees
'Till he began to tire.

Then with the wood, (refreshed by then)
He built a nice big house
Where I was born, "when time allowed"
Said mom, his legal spouse.

The seventh in that family
I lived a special child
I could not walk as well as most
But some ways I was wild.

Jeffers, Minnesota
A tiny little town
Many decades later
It seems not to have grown.

When afterwards my family moved
And settled on a farm
I once climbed up a windmill
Lest big geese do me harm.

About that time, exploring with
My little brother Tom
I fell into a deep, cold spring
Then went a-dripping home.

When four years old, I went to school
With siblings twice as old
I tried to learn my phonics, and
Was duly there enrolled.

When school was out and chores were done
We played at games together
Running, hiding, guessing games
Depending on the weather.

Each day I walked to school across
A stream within a grove
The ice was thin and I fell in.
"Teach" dried me by the stove.

I was a wayward little one:
When walking was too hard
I cried 'till someone carried me
Back to my home and yard.

Some Houses I Have Known (continued)

One springtime when the River
Had overflowed its banks
Our fields were under water:
One more of nature's pranks.

Our house was big and made of stone
The walls were thick and strong
Progress took that house away
It grieves me that it's gone.

Built on the black and yellow trail
Called the Hyman place
Hard by a quarry which prevails
Today it leaves no trace.

Where the garden once had been
A field of corn now stands
The road up toward the schoolhouse
Has quit its wonted plans.

Come summer nineteen twenty
My father's restless soul
Induced a trip to New York State
For land he could control.

We went by train to Hamilton
We got a great big farm
Four rooms upstairs and six below
Cut wood to keep us warm.

From third grade all through high school
I "rode the bus" to school
A horse-drawn sleigh with benches
Or wagon was the rule.

Lilacs grew beyond the fields
The orchard beyond the hill
An evening's lovely outing
The apple bin could fill.

There was a big old willow tree
Close to the kitchen door
Years later, visiting, I knew
It moved ten yards or more!

But this, a younger willow
Replaced the older tree
A triumph, true, for nature
Surprising shock for me.

We had good crops, with solid work
Milked cows, fed chickens, hogs
Tilled fields and gardens, orchard
Kept some old cats and dogs.

On weekends we went dancing
With neighbors old and young
With music, food, and laughter
How the rafters rung!

No friends had I among my kin
At school acceptance shrunk
My leg was nightly rubbed with grease
Extracted from a skunk!

I learned to hunt for clovers
That had four leaves a piece
Had lots of time for schoolwork
Or watch the moon increase.

The winters were the hardest
They kept us working hard
The long, dark nights were coldest
No playing in the yard.

Some week-ends we made popcorn
Or went up hill to slide
We always got along indoors
Or else were sent outside.

In Spring we tapped the maple trees
In Fall picked apples, pears
In Summer tended crops and flocks
And all such farm affairs.

I was the farmer's daughter
He was a handsome guy
No one could stop our marriage
We both were young and spry.

Right after we were married
We lived on Charles Street
Compared to many others
Those days were mighty sweet.

The little home was roomy,
Cozy, clean, and neat
It stands today all red and proud
At twelve on Charles Street.

Some Houses I Have Known (continued)

We moved about in wartime
Uncertain as we felt
One thing we learned then surely,
To tighten up our belt.

One time we lived on Spring Street
Below a grassy hill
The land is now "developed"
The old house stands there still.

We had successive children
As nature could provide
We took four kids to Texas
Three little ones had died.

Our few brief months in Arkansas
We lived a pauper's life
Then took the train to Texas
The kids and man and wife.

In Childress was a tiny house
With peach tree by its side
No friends, no car - streets of mud
I thought I could have died.

We soon were off to Sherman
Tired of Childress' goo
A big "box" house with play yard
Where a big hackberry grew.

It stood across from Tony's house
Close to the trolley stop
And when we walked to church, we passed
Right by the ice-cream shop.

And then we moved to Abilene
By plane we learned to fly
This town we seemed to grow up with
We entered from the sky.

A little house, four rooms and bath
And I recall it well.
Just off the road on Ash Street
Where it stood no one can tell.

Bulldozed, leveled, hauled away
Its walls and floors and ceiling
As though in castigation
For illegal substance dealing.

Four rooms, six folks: How could we share
In any peaceful way, or fair?
We felt so cramped, we made a search
For some place bigger, near the church.

We settled for Meander Street
The kids agreed "This will be neat"
Out the window, up the stairs
They scrambled, singly, or in pairs.

We grew up here, and learned to drive
Some went on to college
Pursuing education
And academic knowledge.

Twenty years or more we stayed
Our several students made the grade
And off to college, off to wars
Reunions were within those doors.

There had been room for beds and toys
We took in kids and there was noise
Then mama went to nursing school
And life was fairly calm and cool.

Army, navy, and marines
Each took one of the boys
And sent them back much later
Presumably with poise.

And Sarah then became a nurse
Complete with registration
Which demonstrates a true resolve
Determined calculation.

Martha left to prove herself
In studied relocation
Subsequently married
To begin regeneration.

Then for a year we tried our lot
Down in the valley - where it's hot
We learned to love the ocean's beach
But came back home, so Ken could teach.

This hardest time of all our life
The worst of all for stress and strife
We spent beside the Rio Grande
Close to the ocean and to sand.

Some Houses I Have Known (continued)

When we returned to Abilene
We found a house on block fifteen
of Hickory. With Andy there
We tried to live and work and share.

The neighborhood soon showed decay
And so we made our get-away
To Shangri-La we came to stay
And Camelot remains today.

You know the big brick ranch-style house -
You saw the hole made by a mouse
This house is where you came to play
I hope you never stay away.

Someday someone may steal this book
But you must always feel
The pleasures that we shared today
No one can ever steal.

Our family tree has sturdy limbs
And you're a lively little twig
How great the possibilities
For you when you are big.

You now must work and strive and grow
And be the kind of man
Who'll make the name you bear today
The pride of all our clan.

For me this precious little book
Was far too thick you see
Perhaps when you have had a look
You'll finish it for me! (1994)

Recitation

My growing grandson, Travis
He's met an awful plight
He has to read my verses
And remember what I write.

In sympathy I struggle
(Try vainly to recall)
I not only can't remember
I can scarcely read them all.

I now add to the rhyming
Compounding his sad state
Incredibly bad timing
A condition which I hate.

So if you'll just forgive me
For the moment I will stop
I fear I'll take it up again
Until at last I drop.

(1995)

Some Houses I Have Known (abridged)

A little guy named Travis
Has come into our lives,
He likes to play with flashlights
And likes to sharpen knives.

Here are remembered stories of
Some houses I have known.
None of them was better than
The one you call your own.

The seventh in that family
I lived a special child
I could not walk as well as most
But some ways I was wild.

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In Childress was a tiny house
With peach tree by its side
No friends, no car - streets of mud
I thought I could have died.

We soon were off to Sherman
Tired of Childress' goo
A big "box" house with play yard
Where a big hackberry grew.

And then we moved to Abilene
By plane we learned to fly
This town we seemed to grow up with
We entered from the sky.

A little house, four rooms and bath
And I recall it well.
Just off the road on Ash Street
Where it stood no one can tell.

We settled for Meander Street
The kids agreed "This will be neat"
Out the window, up the stairs
They scrambled, singly, or in pairs.

Twenty years or more we stayed
Our several students made the grade
And off to college, off to wars
Reunions were within those doors.

Then for a year we tried our lot
Down in the valley - where it's hot
We learned to love the ocean's beach
But came back home, so Ken could teach.

When we returned to Abilene
We found a house on block fifteen
of Hickory. With Andy there
We tried to live and work and share.

You know the big brick ranch-style house -
You saw the hole made by a mouse
This house is where you came to play
I hope you never stay away.

To Travis and family,

I appreciate your little poem
About your granny's former home.

Now, grace my present domicile
By dropping in once in a while! (1999)

More Poems

The world will little note
Nor long remember
The few good things I wrote
Since last September

Who sees the meager value
Of a quote
I filched and saved to use
In late November?

Who cares what lonely hours
I devote
To watching sparkling stars
Or glowing embers?

How tenuous the brain storm
I'll promote
Before December

Colored black or colored white
Without regard to weight or height
Pink or yellow, red or brown
Anyone can smile or frown
All of these, and you and me
People are colored to some degree

I can't sing and you can't see
Which is crippled, you or me?
Display your talents gracefully

My blood-pressure's like a butterfly
It flits about, too low - then high
I treat the ill with wearied eye

Light as a feather
Fickle as weather
Even at rest, wings flap together

Bi-polar, it can bring me fear
That my demise is near, or here
So please pass me another beer

Whee! Look at me!
We are the nation's elderly-
We have struggled, won or lost
'Till our hair began to frost

We first slow up and then slow down
Poorest memory in town
Deteriorating ears and eyes
Can't distinguish truth from lies

Of late, we'd be the last to know
What's genuinely apropos
That we don't make the fist string team
Does nothing for our self-esteem.

Just outside there lies a riverbed
Where seldom flows a goodly stream
To wet this watershed
When meager precious water flows
We scarcely note 'twas mud instead

Time offers us items of which
We are quite unaware
A growth of long long fingernails
And a wealth of silvery hair

11-1-2000

Never in any one year, have I
So often heard "How time does fly"

This is November - and not July
How can time so soon go by?

This one thing I'm sure about:
One day at a time, without a doubt.

4-6-01

Moving is not a one-day chore
There's weeks of preparation
One day a truck is at the door
Then comes recuperation

Rooms take on a new dimension
They're full in no time flat!
Kids are helpful - not to mention
They respond to "not like that!"

However, when your routine's back
And all is a before
Your little inner self might say -
"Let's do this one time more"

4-6-01

Life's a lovely filigree

With give and take appropriately

Contrasting, changing interestingly

Enjoy, embrace them appreciatively

To treasure and accept respectfully. (respectfully?)

#77 Rain I

The rain today is not for me

It's for a crop of wheat

The footing's slick, It's quite a trick

To even cross the street

While the rain is pouring down

I might as well relax

I know the rain is mostly gain

On which we pay no tax

Shall I check the mailbox

Under my umbrella?

To find that all the mail today

Was for the other fella!

I think I'll sit and sip a drink

My usual cup of cheer

Pretending I live in the pink

And hope the sky will clear

I'll use the same old cup I've had

For lo these many years

I'll use it stained, or since it rained

Wash it in heaven's tears!

#78 Rain II

It isn't raining rain for me
My cup's already full
My grass is green. I've never seen
So many weeds to pull!

It isn't raining rain for me
It's for the farmer's crop
My porch is wet. The more we get
The less I like to mop.

It isn't raining rain for me
There's plenty in our lakes
And it's already plain to see -
Or do I make mistakes?

It isn't raining! now I see
The grass is dry as sand
Let it rain - Let it pour
Just make me understand.

It isn't raining rain on me
A fair and equal dose
But if it's not exactly true
Admit it's mighty close.

#79 Rain III

It isn't raining rain today
Today it's raining mud
And all the shiny auto tops
Look like heaps of crud.

It isn't raining yet, today
Our street's still flowing strong
In case the flood gets deeper
How will we get along?

But when the sun begins to shine
The grass will stretch its top
Then, rain or shine, I'm not inclined
To either sleep or shop.

But will I start the mower,
And push it 'round the yard?
Not while I live and rest in peace
I cannot work that hard!

#80

Go gently, coach driver, my muscles are sore
Last week at the barber's, I fell to the floor
I rolled myself over, got up, and went home
Today I feel achy in each of my bones.

Go gently, good driver, we'll arrive in good time
The pool and the sauna this hour are mine
Then come with your pumpkin and ferry me back
To my home in "the square" where I'll hit the sack.

Tomorrow, dear driver, I'll meet you again
We'll speed to the pool for another good swim
Then off for my haircut, if I'm still alive
One day, I hope that I'll learn to drive.

#81

I dropped in for a haircut
 Before I scarce could blink
My feeble knees and trusty wheels
 No longer were in synch

I dropped down two steps extra,
 Feeling graceless - rude
That in these posh surroundings
 I should so intrude

I knew that I had lost control
 When stars flashed through my head
And I proceeded on my trip -
 But, to the rug instead

My left ear met a table
 During my descent
A minor inconvenience
 Of the incident

It's time for a decision
 A judgement - a resolve
To mind my steps intently
 When I am so involved

#82

For these several years, now
Words have been my life
To clear the air and rescue
My factious self from strife

To offer you a point of view
To settle kids' disputes
And record my history
However things compute

When I could snatch occasion
I'd use these words of mine
Intuitively knowing
That lines must always rhyme

To serve the progress of my days
Record in rhyme each passing phase
Then, when at last I take my leave
You'll know there's something up my sleeve.

June 11 -01

A willing candidate am I
 For solitude - seclusion -
Today the noise assaults our ears
 Producing pure confusion

Silence takes a gilded bloom
In the wake of such bombardment
Of screaming kids and shouting mothers
Giggling schoolgirls - whistling others

The wisdom of our times, I need
 The patience of the ancients
So when at last my pen runs dry
 We'll have a chat - just you and I.

July 1 -01

To Kevin

You've been a good boy
So here's a new toy
Be careful not to abuse it

If you have the knowledge
To enter a college
It's certain you know how to use it

If you make a mistake
Just enter "out-take"
And determine to right the concoction

With equipment like this
You surely can't miss
Just remember - failure's no option!

July '01

Babies

The young of almost every kind
Are fetching, cuddly-cute
Tiny replicas of forebears
This we don't dispute

But grow they must - and grow they do
Like others of their breed
Their playful actions now are few
Authentic valid laws ring true -

What is all the noise about?
They called the Roto-rooters
To clean the bagpipes out.

A syzygy is two coupled feet
Applied to a dipody
Sounds like a swift kick, doesn't it?

#83

Hummingbirds and Butterflies
Are familiar in the summer
Each has a separate history
Either one a bummer

Hummingbirds, in springtime
Will hide their little nests
Keeping us in ignorance
Of their traits that we like best

Butterflies, conversely
Completely disappear
Later reemerging
That lifestyle is queer

So, when you see a wolly-worm
Or low-hanging cocoon
Imagine how it's going to look
On orange blossoms soon.

Sept. 2 - 01

My favorite food is oatmeal
To add to its normal appeal
I douse it with Silk-a-Soy milk
A quite satisfactory meal

I avoid most meats, roast or steak
So Baked Beans and Peas, Sweet corn and cheese
Spice up my daily intake

Hamburger gives me the willies
Same can be said of all chilies
But there's salmon, sardines and fish
What more could I want on my dish

I mostly like things without bones
But I don't mind a few cores or stones
I shun things whose names are unknown

The length of a meal is sporadic, informal
Diet is varied diverse, and abnormal -
Seldom confused with what seems to be normal

Aug. 30 - 01

People of high caliber
Choose to drive a bus
Under their attentive care
We move - the public - US!

But Benny's of a special breed
Dignified, courageous
Helpful, kind and cheerful
His attitude's contagious.

Concerted, combined and collective
The trade demands respect
And special recognition's due
Each time that we connect

Paratransit Service is a lofty undertaking
A simple coach across town
It certainly ain't
The one who makes a routing plan
Has to be s Saint!

A moving jigsaw puzzle
Is the paratransit service
Completing impossible jobs
For unimpressible mobs

My favorite driver's on the way
To take me anywhere I say
In pumpkin or coach
Without reproach
Is the prince who's been driving all day

Discrete, reserved and cultured
Polished - and with constraint
The one who makes the routing plan
Has to be a SAINT!

Sept. 01

A moving jigsaw puzzle
Is the paratransit service
Completing impossible jobs
For unimpressible mobs.
Whenever conflicts arise,
Surprise, they organize!

If I were dealing the accolades
To the most deserving
I'd give the Ace of Spades to one
Who does his best by serving.

Discrete, reserved and cultured
Polished - with constraint
The one who makes the routing plan
Has to be a SAINT!

I'd give the drivers praises -
But I know they'd prefer raises!

#84

The challenge of raising a family
Is awesome, dreadful, stupendous
Behavior in immature offspring
Is vulgar, disruptive, horrendous

Mothers lose sight of their youngsters
As they drive gaily away
Fathers disrupt their instruction
Minimizing the part they should play

None can avoid overhearing
The jargon of tousled youth
Ribald, ill-mannered language
Parlance vulgar, uncouth

Aug 19 - 01

Watermelon Pickles

Choose a melon with a rind that's thick
If it says "Thud" it's the one to pick
Or it's mostly white, if you choose to plug
I prefer to just give it a slug

Eat the melon and save the rind
Because it's the best one you could find
Peel the green from off the top
Pare the red part off - then stop!

Cut the pickles the size you like
They need not look precisely alike
In water and alum, soak them all night
Don't bother to taste them, they won't seem right

The next day drain and rinse them well
Just why isn't clear, so I can't tell
For the next half hour, boil the lot
Until they look clear - and not just hot

Now drain again and let them cool
The cooling itself's no rigid rule
But if you've decided to take a taste
You'll decide the project's a big waste

If you have patience to proceed from here
You're on your own I greatly fear
Well-sweetened vinegar is the key
Other than that, don't look at me!

Please don't clone my stem-cells
I have defective genes
They've plagued me many years, now
Tap in on someone clean.

No respectable Martian
 Would think of using me
So old and fat and wrinkled
 With nothing left pain-free

I'd really hate cremation
 Although I think I know
I'd have a nice new manicure
 And would like to have it show.

Please don't hold a funeral
Don't preach at my expense
 I'd rather be cremated
 Than left without defense

Let there be no burial
Just let my ashes blow
 This is my last and final wish
 See that it's done just so.

#85

Your life upon this good green earth
You may cancel at any time
Change your ways, move about
Just don't mess with mine.

Don't alter my rhyming
Disrupt my timing
Or mar the gist of my song
Like it or leave it
Believe it - receive it -
But don't merely
Give it the gong

A challenge I present to those
Who may not find this funny
I'm simply not soliciting
Any of your money

Sept 1 - 01

My chairs are inclined to complain
Hand-made antiques, no wonder each squeaks
Profusely when I entertain.

My recliners conform to my shape
Their meager appeal for resting one's heels
Is a fact that few could escape

Which normally calls for a couch
But search as they may It's plain as the day
I furnish no couch for a grouch.

Communication's not my thing

My message needs to have a ring
A special cadence, rhyme and swing
A beat, a pulse, a throb or stroke
Otherwise I'd rather choke!

#86 If I Could! I Would!

If I could re-invent myself
I'd paint myself a smile
I wouldn't fail to bring delight
Every little while

I'd have a sense of fashion
Present an air of class
To everyone who sees me
Any time they pass

An affable expression
Would charm the ones I greet
I'd cheer the population
Friendly, but discreet

Somewhere along the way, I'd find
A tolerance for noise
I'd value sonic blaring
Made by grown-up boys

If ever I should be alone
I'd use my pen and paper
To feel a sense of friendliness
Just by this little caper

#87

A happy group of ladies
Share a swimming pool
Where anyone is welcomed
And all the rules are cool

We stand and chat, or move about
As the spirit moves
Trade a thoughtful joke or two
And no one disapproves

The secret in these pleasantries
Is judged by how we feel
When all go home contented
We know we have a deal

Double benefit have we
With mild and cool activity
Social volubility
All coincidentally

My joy is peer approval
My craft is in the rhyming
When the story's finished
The ending's purely timing

8/11/01

In Favor of Domestic Tranquility

Content am I as days go by
To take good care of me
And leave the squabbles of the day
To those across the sea

But I would make suggestion
That they lay down their arms
And soothe the population
Who do each other harm.

They need the tree of life today
To drop its healing leaves
Bring calm to old Jerusalem
And drop their sordid peeves

When they can't live together
A man and wife should part
Why should they stand with rock in hand
Reluctant to depart?

L Dart

Bride is for taking and giving
Birth is for giving
By is for standing
Care is for giving or taking
Cat is for putting out
Camp is for breaking
Conclusions are for jumping to
Your best is for giving
Money is for laundering
Envelopes are for pushing
Elbows are for rubbing
Triggers are for pulling
Hearts are for breaking
Favors for needing
Tables are for turning
Taxies are for hailing
Hill is to go over
Scenes are to return to
Lightning is for greasing
Music is for facing
Tears are to laugh through
Manners are for minding
Magic is for working
Backs are for turning
Your neck is for Saving
Cold is for catching
Your eye is to bat
Thumb is to be under

#88 In Veneration of Silvery Hair

With mounting apprehension
We watch the sun go down
In restive expectation
Await our thorny crown.

The hapless mysteries of life
Bring conflicts to an end:
We do the best we can with that
On which results depend.

A final resolution
Defies our understanding
The end of life will find us
notwithstanding.

When this occasion then occurs
Expect celestial overtures!

#89

Incarcerated by Car-lessness

I feel much like a wayward child
Grounded, secluded, confined
I've surrendered my license, relinquished my car
Old habits are now left behind.

Retired in endless boredom
Absent from groups I have known
People have largely forgot me
How quickly the languor has grown!

I sit and I mutter and mumble
Try out my paper and pen
My desk is a horrible jumble
And my waste-basket fills up again.

I search my mind for the freedom
Provided by hands on the wheel
Transitions will never come easy
However daring I feel.

#90 Feline Treachery

House cats are a restless breed
Pacing, meeting an unknown need.
Wanting to be returned to the wild
They beg and plead like a willful child.
"Mama, open this big old door
I'll climb a tree and say no more.
I'll catch a bird or rob a nest
Or chase that squirrel. He's a pest!"

House cats have a delicate sense
Of habits, wants and wishes intense
And appetites fickle at random times.
They'll pounce on a dust ball, pretend to climb
Come and beg at the ice-box door
Hoping it's tuna they smell on the floor.

Nervously cautious, skittishly jesting
Curiously playfully trying and testing
Voicing this plea "Do open the door
So I can get out in the world to explore."
I turned around to look at the weather
And my cat had tied my shoestrings together!

"NO MORE CANDY!" a voice rang out!
Dominance unquestioned
A mother pushing a cart about -
The child made one suggestion
That little ball of red hot will
Looked up with jaundiced eye
Enough ill will to cause a chill
In the growl of so small a guy
He shook a tight fist
What an awful twist
Authority had taken
That there exist
Extremes like this
I felt like I'd been shaken
"He mimics his father"
My instant observation
A malevolent tongue
In one so young
Must take some cultivation!

Two Monkeys

Two foraging monkeys on one tree
Eating fruits and tender shoots
Each one signals "Look at me!"
One dangled by his long, stout tail
His neighbor, noting that detail
Climbed it to reach a swaying limb
To garner fruit that's close to him.
Nonchalant, the bulky one
Skipped no beat, but forged ahead
Plucking plums at their mellow best
From off the limb - then pats his chest -
Sign language for "be my guest!"

A Modern Invention

There sits a little table lamp
Sedately by my bed
And when I touch its little base
A blush glows from its head

A second touch - it starts to shine
"How's this?" it seems to say
Now with a third and gentle tap
It shines its heart away

Then at the fourth connection
It sits there, dark as pitch
Not staring, only daring me
To find its hidden switch.

My Menu

I shop and plan my menu
As well as I am able
Understanding I'm the one
Seated at the table

Only I need relish
The nourishment I get
I can twist the recipes
Until they seem correct

If I don't like the salads
Or the way they look
I'm sure to eat them anyway
In deference to the cook

Elderly Patient and Experienced Physician

I have a new doctor
 A gem of a fellow
Astute, assured, composed
He's thorough, efficient, serene, and mellow
My needs are never opposed

This doctor's remarkably patient
His vision reveals what's obscured
I'm counseled, guided, persuaded,
Comforted, calmed - and CURED!

A bird sat on my garden fence
And sang to me this song intense
Cornbread, cornbread, cornbread, ma'am
Please, please, please, Louise

This awesome, urgent vital song
Shrill, sibilant, and strong
In demanding, fluid tongue
To a feisty bird belong

Rehearsed, so well, the message
Spontaneous and free
The whole melodic message
Especially for me!

It sat upon the fence post where
Asserting its cunning demand
If I had had the cornbread there
'twould have eaten it from my hand

Help Make Texas a Better Place?

Sounds right silly - on its face
What's so bad that you'd erase?
Or even worse, that you'd replace?
We don't need much extra space.
We could adopt a spare airbase.
That might help us just a trace
And folks can't view that as disgrace.
We'd take it in our big embrace.

My Several Lifetimes

At first I was a little girl
Little and lame and lonely
Seventh of ten siblings
Tactless, inept, and homely
My schooling started early
And was rigidly pursued
Immediately thereafter
Began my ample brood

When mine were fed
And clothed, trained and schooled
I studied nursing's laws and rules
And after working twenty years
And paying taxes through my tears
I got new hips, then volunteered
To do for those who needed aid
And spent my half of what I'd made

And when I tired of routine things
I traveled at my whim
Whether or not accompanied
And taught myself to swim
The swimming I continue still
The traveling has ended
Relinquishing my license
Made me feel offended

I rented then at Chimney Square
All my furnishings were there
Mail was delivered every day
Laundry was but a block away
In walking distance I could find
Food and drugs and books and wine
A hundred neighbors, more or less
Alleviated loneliness

Advanced in age, I've time to brood
With little need for man nor food
Recalling things I might have done
Recollecting one by one
These latter days will still be fine
The stunts I pull are only mine
So sober, diffident, and blunt
I'll gloat with pride
At my last stunt

My final antic was to be
Producing printed poetry
But prudence and austerity
Taken to extremity
Made my hopes illusory