

This fox walks into a poem

around the bar stand a wolf, a vulture,
a crow and two rabbits; on the villanelle
lounges a boa constrictor, a couple
of chinchillas and three cats.

What are you doing here? the crow asks,
May I ask what you're doing here? fox replies,
Oh we all symbolize something or other, says boa.
A raven sextet plays another rondeau redouble',
crow caws along, a little off key.

Well, I gotta take a whiz, wolf howls,
and heads for the john door.
He's lifting his leg to piss in the villanelle
when fox comes in: *This place is one big metaphor,*
Tell me, wolf snaps, lowering his leg, *I can't stand it.*

How come she put you in the poem? one of the cats
asks fox. *Oh she needed something to rhyme with*
locks or talks and keep her pentameter, I guess.
Now the boa's hitting on one of the chinchillas,
but she knows he's only after oral sex.

Last stanza, bartender calls, *closing in four lines,*
fox orders another round, talks over the music,
as the ravens play their last number,
they all finish with tequila sestinas
as the poet locks the back door.

Fox Tracks

not yet dawn
 drops of blood
 across the lawn
 a fox
tracks fresh November snow
 prowls nose high
 has hunted mice and voles all night
 ruffles its fur
 carries fresh kill
 in its jaw
 shakes off snowflakes
 while in the warm house
 we sleep
the night world invisible
 thinking we're safe from death
 long before
 we have our first coffee
 the fox has eaten its vole
 bones and all
 sleeps now
 its tracks
 and blood
 fresh still

Show Me God

When I was seven I asked my parents
for a book with a picture of God.
They brought home Bible books with Jesus on the cover
and stories about prophets like Abraham and Isaac.

What was I expecting?
God driving a car or eating fried chicken,
God smoking a cigarette and drinking coffee,
God teaching my second grade class?

Older now, I've read many arguments,
some mornings I wake up an atheist,
some mornings I wake up wondering.
One morning I won't wake up at all.

When that time comes,
I'll die still wondering, but just
scatter me outside my window
among goldenrod and aster.

All in a Day's News

deadly quake in Afghanistan and Pakistan

violence in Syria

huge spike in civilian flight

assault on villages

9,000 migrants a day

crossed into Greece

U.S. debt default

potentially cataclysmic default

major seismic fault

cuts in Medicare and social security

disability benefits

dementia is draining

leading killers of Americans

homelessness vexes mayor

lion populations at risk

misleading idea

Florida and Texas

look pretty mediocre

biennial score card

math and reading scores

quake multiplies war's woes

magnitude of 7.5

Hindu Kush

arrive in droves

make themselves at home

trying to salvage belongings

shaking assumptions

vehicle started shaking

held her seat

defies critics

started as a lark

she won

lower house

political novice studies hard

learns the needs of her constituents

houses collapsed

staring at the building

about to fall as it shook

appeal on climate change
 deadly heat forecast in Persian Gulf by 2100
intolerable to humans
 threatens human life
lion populations would drop by half
 in Central and West Africa
rain to soak eastern U.S.
 California drought
Paranoia in west Texas
 he reached for the butt
of his holstered gun
 wide-scale campaign upheaval
presidential campaign is lacking momentum
 DNA of 11,500 year old child
urging students to attend college
 civil rights voice
lies about police brutality
 arrest or assault of black citizens
he picked the student up and threw her across the room
 more likely to die than whites
at hands of police
 said black lives matter
something straight out of Orwell
 pulled black drivers over for no reason
searched them twice as often
 a new low in campaign finance
murder and mayhem
 middle school to grave
lower standards
 in deadly earthquake
books and dishes flew across the room

Thanks to *The New York Times* and *CNN*

Facts

Maybe on another planet
orbiting a different sun
there are alternate facts
but not usually on our planet
and even on theirs it's unlikely
a sun revolves around the world
and even here
a robin's egg is blue
today's warmer than yesterday
birds fly and we can't
an egg falls if dropped
for only so long
will people revolve around a despot
all creatures evolve

