

Going Going Gone

Going to store for the biggest grill,
going to the store we forgot the gist.
We have a list of wants and desires,
but oh baby we forgot the list.

of what we wanted, of what we came for.
Look at the flyers, the gadgets and such
We want a flat screen TV and a poker table,
Oh baby we don't have enough.

There's lots inside this door,
Purell Lotion, plastic bags, and iced tea,
but baby oh baby the list--missing like the sixties.

We have to have some cleaners, get rid
of the goo, but baby I wonder how many
times we'll go 'round this discount grid.

Don't you know we have to have more
than the others? Look baby,
we just have to keep going
round about this discount store.

of multipurpose contraptions and thingamajigs,
of doohickeys, devices, and tools.
we live in a world, baby, where
it's just better to have more and more.

Blues for my sister Carol

Calling my sister on a Sunday,
calling my sister in Seattle,
hopin' she's not grumpy
'bout her baby girl Sarah.

Well now, Sarah's got the blues,
this blues 's not getting better,
not sure I want the news.
The noontime demon's grabbed her.

Calling my sister on a sunny Sunday,
calling my sister in Seattle,
hopin' she's not grumpy
'bout her baby girl Sarah.

Well now, Sarah's downed many a bottle,
beer, wine, and pills her lovers,
her twenties delivered a debacle.
No doctors have helped her recover.

Calling my sister on a Sunday,
calling my sister in Seattle,
hopin' she's not grumpy
'bout her baby girl Sarah.

Well now, she's in a ton of trouble,
my sister, she's sinking in debt;
it's been a terrible struggle,
'bout Sarah she cannot forget.

Calling my sister on a Sunday,
calling my sister in Seattle,
hopin' she's not grumpy
'bout her little baby Sarah.

A Pigeon

I dreamed the dolls took two stairs at a time at night,
Chatty Cathy drank tea, her high fidelity record snapped "Please take
me with you." "Living Doll" hadn't yet featured in *The Twilight
Zone*. I lived as the silent film star who won her acclaim
with her *Fairy Castle*, which still stands in its full height
at the Museum of Science and Industry, where I drooled over fake
cakes, miniature chandeliers, tiny armoire, where we met under a streetlight,
I having toured the Art Institute's Thorne rooms, you having made your way
from the Marriot, we who among four million boomers had met, had insight
there outside Millennium Park; it had all been a mistake.
The Feminine Mystique had buried us alive. A pigeon would take flight
its droppings landed on you and left me with only ache.

Yet Another Porcupine

Listening in at the water cooler, seeming to set me aside,
a porcupine bent down for a cup,
a little white cup on a pedestal, a perch
like a bird's but low on the bottle,
she sipped coffee black, chased it down with the water.
She stood there for nearly an hour.

In the room women come and go
speaking of sex toys and the size of a penis
in search of a tidbit to put on their forks
and dirt to spread all around the office.
*Like so many who've yearned
to find a pattern in the blood spatter,*

this porcupine wanted congratulations,
a throne, as if she had perfected the art
of moving her soldiers in battle
in search of success and acclaim, who
will treat you like chattel and flaunt her fur coat
and secretly hope you will stumble

when you should be succeeding in all of the arts,
when you could be curled up with a novel,
she sticks you with barbs and finds meaning
in organizational charts; she's boss and in
charge and is ever so certain
of her place just below God.

She rode the train

She always brought a present
wrapped in purple tissue paper
inside a burlap bag.

It always sang a song,
the tune played all night long
the words were probably plain
she always rode the train.

As she swung back and forth,
porch swing's cables creaky,
toe tips only touched
floor's rough-hewn wooden planks.

It always sang a song
the tune played all night long
the words were probably plain
she always rode the train.

She canned peaches, apples, tomatoes,
root cellar fresh not frozen,
wore a taffeta apron,
made strawberry rhubarb pie.

It always sang a song
the tune played all night long
the words were probably plain
she always rode the train.

She suffered from world
news, even canceled her paper,
hoped she'd never ever
hear those blues again.

Instead she sang a song
the tune played all night long
the words were probably plain
she always rode the train

She died at home
her story over,
her soft cheek
hit the floor.

But she still can sing a song
the tune plays all night long
the words are surely plain,

train carries on without her.