

Three languages

There are three languages
one is written
one is spoken
one is sung

I wrote you I love you
death delivered the letter
to the wrong address
now it is just in a collection of poems
below in the library stacks

I spoke and said I love you
life came to eavesdrop
then the horde dropped in
and you left
because it sounded as if it were script
for tourists on a sightseeing tour.

So I sing to you I love you
here are the lyrics written in the liner
here is the music notated on the sheet

I sing to you lyrics and melody
and I hope that love smiles, there several paces back
where love stands in the doorway listening
to what the air carries

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Dating game

Love went on that gameshow
to find a partner

They blindfolded love's eyes but
love listens just as well

Youth promised death (not for youth to promise)
pretty ugly stupid rich in a blaze of glory
youth could only promise death.

Old Age recounted everywhere they'd go
the places they'd visit the music and languages
they'd hear and speak and sing
provided love would never grow up.

Life told love they'd be happy and sad together
and it would dreadful and harsh
but as she'd love life, life would give love reason to live.

Love did choose life and they walked out hand in hand

Youth and Old Age consoled themselves
with boilermakers at the bar next door.

Three children learn a new language

Big brother always learns
the curse words to know what
not to say and keeps silent out of respect.

Sister learns to count to ten
and back to zero so she keeps
time and is on time and arrives
so early as to see herself leave

Little brother learns how to say
I love you and he falls
in love and stays in love.

Indeed

Big brother also learns
blessings to break the silence

Sister also learns alphabets
and spells out what she does
in-between times.

Little brother learns to say
I love you with more than his tongue;
he speaks with his hands
and feet and entire body.

Dig in

She fidgets and twirls
her fingers in her hair
Thines on a fork
twist up strands of pasta.

She grooms her hair and
the rats leave the nest.
Her hair transforms into
capellini good enough to eat.

A halo beams around her head
and burns brighter than neon "dig in".

The light distracts and attracts
throng stop passing by
She pulls her cap down
on her head past her eyes.

There is no dine-in, no take-out.

This is why she covers her hair.

Immolate

He takes stage, strikes a match
and pinches it with thumb and forefinger

The flame burns until the match
disappears into skin
and it singes his digits.

Where he drops the used match
and says "ow".

He repeats this ten times
a million throughout his life.

This is his self-immolation
because no bishop or priest
or anyone cares that he burns
for love of God, or for desire
or in hell, but he cares that he burns.

At least when he burns
the baked casserole in the oven
and the guys and gals in the soup line
still it eat it when he serves them.

He doesn't burn for nothing.