

On Seeing My Daughter Still Awake
and Sad at Seven in the Morning

She pierced
The room's darkness,
Dad?

Yes?

Would you draw me a bath?

Sure.

Bubbly, hot hygiene

A space heater

A ready cup

of hot chocolate

Some gentle tunes

Cleanliness ranks

as the saying goes

Right up there

With the divine

or at least adjacent

to it

Just the thing

To calm you,

Send you off

To slumber.

Sweet lavender

Dreams

My precious girl.

The Older I Grow

The more I realize
Each animating
Breath's amazing

Rain,
Beyond leaving me wet,
Really is a state of mind

The beads number 108
Just 'cause,
No need to reason

Faith resides
In fiercely loving
This person who's mine

By rights,
A hundred skips of rope,
Pushing up fifty

Is difficult but marvelous
In that it still can be done
At all

Welsh may be awash
In consonants yet feels
Gorgeous in my ear

Anyway,
Coffee can well abide
As its own course

I *get* to
Rather than
Got to.

It Had Been Dark

I could've sworn
The last time
I'd noticed

But now after
Tucking away
Within the red velvet

Pouch in which
They arrived
Beads

Made by a Ukrainian
Artist selling his
Wares on Etsy

I can see to pour
Coffee and not spill
As light streams

Through windows
Though a seeming
Blink ago

It had been dark.

October Snow in Sleepy Hollow

You can run a side-by-side video
In your mind of this sight a week ago
When it had been warm and colorful
And be now struck by its stark, dark

Monochromatic distinctness—
In fact, my girl-child made a TikTok of it,
Which you should go check out . . .
After you finish reading my poem

Yet the temperature would oft-times
Appear not to warrant snow
As it straddles that pre-ordained line
Of freezing: just under—and we awoke

Yesterday to fresh snow, with alternating
Melt-then-replenish moments
Day-long, and last night, more fresh snow
As evidenced by my snowman

And his perfectly downy-round dome
With a gaze I'd angled up to the second floor
Living space, winking his greeting
With pinecone eyes and long carrot nose

Which my daughter ate last night
For dinner, thus removing an attractive
Nuisance of being eaten by a critter
Unaccustomed to orange food—

This *is* a national park, after all,
Our resident ranger said—
A pâte which at 34 degrees now
Glances downwards and then . . . topples

Leaving his twiggy, upturned arms
—alone amongst his features—
in an unmistakable, upwards gesture of
Where's my Head?

A Hunger So Strong: A Week and Two Days before the Election

Aspen leaves flitter in the breeze,
green all-but-gone upon October's arrival
now welcoming its lone holiday in coming days
before All Souls take on the mantle,

Calendaring in wet winter
mainly lined with grays,
some blues, but all cool
skies these next four lunar rounds,

Beyond the boundless angst, the ennui of twenty-twenty
hindsight hopes, shoreless security,
seeming dreams of hurricanes, floods, infernos, plague
fake news fallen on ears which anyway won't hear,

There remains a hunger
so strong for wisdom,
for a reason to carry on,
as critters do—

A hummingbird plunges
through aspen leaves more yellow than green,
into the welcoming, red-flowering
Sage.

A Hopeful End: A Week and Six Days Since the Election

The raccoon lollops past the window
Leaving her prints in the mulch
Kate and I turn thirty in a week and a half and
We'll take a romantic cabin in the mountains,
Thanks very much,
To hike, cook, sing, strumming instruments,
In the moonlight
Leaving teens to their cartoons and Minecraft
Burritos, burgers, pizzas,
Piles of bananas and mandarins
Medieval costumes, piano and guitar
He . . . I wish him no ill will . . .
He who Lucy will only call "el Diablo" contests the
Outcome yet will nonetheless soon be gone
His successor, his Better, pitch-perfect
"The United States government is perfectly Capable of escorting trespassers
Out of the White House"

The kids are alright writing

Haikus with Rich
Vaccines announced, I pop five bucks into the can
For the good reverend's runoff, O,
Imagine—she takes the senate floor time
And again
She smiles, a twinkle in her eye,
And casts the tie-breaker for climate,
Plague relief for families, struggling,
Racial justice, for infrastructure,
For the Dreamers—
Blessed Kamala.

Haikus with My Friend Rich Who Lives Far Away and Whose Poems are Indented

Scrub Jay picks the ground
She flies off, crab apple leaf
Dangles from her beak.

Head on my pillow,
16 hours since feeding ducks
Smiling for your haiku

There was a farmer
Who'd keep time knowing the hours
Since his ducks had dined.

That song you're singing
You wrote of Opal Whiteley
So sweet, Please don't stop.

One, two, three yachts lean
Mired in mud, missed when the tide
Cleared summer's boats and sailors

Sinnot Overlook
Icicles poke Mazama's
Rim, Llaol, Wizard's peak.