

## Running Late On Telegraph Avenue

I am supposed to be home by five-fifteen  
but my watch has stopped  
so I'm hurrying.

I know I am late and I am  
walking in the rain, a light drizzle

with the so low gray clouds  
rolling just above the building tops

catching the peak of the campanile,  
obscuring the clock.

I feel compelled to stop  
to look through the mist  
and catch a glimpse

of the minute hand on three  
and that's it.

The mist, the fog, the drizzle combined  
create a shroud of timeless gray  
around me and I am mesmerized by

the shadowy figures of people  
weaving in and out of this haze.

I pull my notebook out of my pocket  
and look around for a reasonably dry place  
to sit, to write this down.

In the distance loom the trunks of large trees  
whose branches disappear in the cloud

yet seem to offer the likeliest protection  
from the rain, so I move toward them  
as darkness settles in.

I reach the trees and find a hand hewn bench  
perfect for sitting on, and I sit.

As I begin my notes,  
I know that I will be chastised for being late,  
but that is the least of my worries now:

already the wind has picked up,  
blowing away the mystery of the figures

along with the mist, the fog, the rain

and I am left listening to the wind  
in the eucalyptus trees whistling,  
rustling the leaves in the night air  
as she whispers softly her secret intentions.

## The Blank Page

On my desk there  
sits the clutter of the days

books, papers, some coins  
a half empty bottle of Courvoisier  
my favorite lip stained glass.

I look at the blank page  
and wonder for a moment why  
I persist.

I hear  
the church bells in the night rain

and I resign myself  
to it--

nothing to rely on now  
but the act of writing

not love, truth, beauty  
these beasts run wild

and cannot be counted on  
when they are wanted

however many times they do  
startle me when I least expect them  
and impress me no doubt

they only enhance,  
they do not sustain.

Only the work  
actually feeds me.

So I push myself into the poem  
struggle with it, live in it

until sometimes I feel lost  
in the words of a chaotic chorus  
of echoing voices.

Frustrated, I run from it  
run till my legs will carry me  
no more.

I fall on the ground  
out of breath

and one whisper from the chorus,  
very quietly:

How to explain love  
or a hand even

to touch gently  
a lover's cheek,

fingers, a slight  
quiver

two sighs  
and no speech

What can I do?  
I get up and walk home

Let the words roll around  
in my head

smile at my friends when  
I meet them

play with the children  
make breakfast  
wash the dishes

listen for whispers.

## The Flower Keeper

I kept the flowers  
you brought into my room  
and placed in the vase on my dresser  
more than a year ago  
now

without you, the flowers  
wilted and lifeless  
now

the room so quiet  
without the sounds  
of our love making  
laughter

now,  
without you here,  
I have only the delicate flowers  
whose petals fall at the slightest  
touch

now,  
I have just the memory  
of love.

## My Poem

My wife, my children, my love  
my heart, my house, my home

My job, my money, my time  
my health, my life, my soul

My happiness, my hopes, my dreams  
my sadness, my death, my gloom

My desire, my bed, my sex  
my body, my blood, my bones

My knowledge, my books, my ideas  
my pens, my paper, my poems

My God, my fault  
my own

## The Moment

Like the time when we  
you and I together  
needed to meet  
needed to touch  
ended.