



His Mature Style, Vol. 2: Meteorology of Mountain View

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Acknowledgments

This work was substantially enabled by the MRC Psycholinguistic Database (<http://www.psych.rl.ac.uk/>; Wilson, M.D. (1988). The MRC Psycholinguistic Database: Machine Readable Dictionary, Version 2. *Behavioral Research Methods, Instruments and Computers*, **20**(1), 6-11). The author made extensive use of the Edinburgh Associative Thesaurus (<http://www.eat.rl.ac.uk/>; Kiss, G.R., Armstrong, C., Milroy, R., and Piper, J. (1973). An associative thesaurus of English and its computer analysis. In Aitken, A.J., Bailey, R.W. and Hamilton-Smith, N. (Eds.), *The Computer and Literary Studies*. Edinburgh: University Press.), especially the *EAT for MS-Windows* software package developed by Professor Maocheng Liang of the National Research Center for Foreign Language Education, Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), People's Republic of China.

Occasion: Meteorology of Mountain View

The car is full of gas.
The cats are happy.
It's another perfect day in Mountain View,
even conceivably better than Hawaii.

It's a good day to get out
early to the Baylands, watching
pelicans, terns, avocets, godwits, curlews, egrets,
cormorants, dowitchers, blue herons.

Just sauntering along Castro.
Warm sun, cool breeze, and everyone enjoys
being in the mix.
Another sunny day in Mountain View.

Even better, there's no school,
because it's the middle of summer.
Let's catch a movie.
It's another gifted day in Mountain View.

Pride and Prejudice

Too early, and not quite warm enough,
to take a leisurely walk.
What's on for us tonight, or
later today? It depends

on the balance of sunshine
and shadow. If the sun shines,
then we must shelter.
If it hides, then we must sleep.

Strenuous work doesn't pay off.
We have no reason to go out.
Let's take a day off
and have a long, restful nap.

Yes, you are correct, it's Monday,
but even so, with
dusk inevitably creeping in on us later,
I'm ready to start feeling tired.

Animal Heroes

They never shy away from fire,
nor fear to fly
from France to New Mexico
to foil plots and rescue children.

No volcano's seething cone is too hot,
no cave too devoid of light,
no mountain peak too shrouded or desolate.
They always get through.

One day pollution to
control, the next a port to defend.
A Liberian tanker's putrid
waste, a diabolical nuclear terrorist raid.

They spare no effort to block evil.
Mute, they always seem wise.
Their post-heroic demeanor is modest and plain.
Their manners fit the interview.

Big Red

A big red wind, a golden daffodil,
another kind of poetic flower,
and let me be the first
to wish that your birthday

may be as cold as war.
It has come to my attention
that you're a dancer.
In the first place, making such claims ...

I am an idiot!
I meant to wish that your marriage
may be as warm as Paris
after a gentle, good-natured, summer shower.

The sun shines brighter than ever!
Let me be the first to
admit that a thrush's song smooths over
the damage of red wind.

Instant Coffee

It's time to be up, alert!
We must now all rise,
answering the call of the alarm clock,
finding the scraps of energy

that will make getting up just plausible.
Admitting it's not quite light,
we can't claim to feel lively.
Perhaps we never will.

As we slowly rouse
ourselves, the sun gradually makes its way
over the horizon. The sunshine
cheers us up like instant coffee.

We free ourselves of night,
having no choice but to lave
and make some noise.
We must up and start the music.

Amounting To

The study of birds is very much
a study of freedom itself.
Kestrels are quiet. Gulls are noisy.
Ooh! I see, it's

a question of broader ornithology,
broad enough to include the otter,
the pheasant, the fox –
in short, the predator and the prey.

We see one robin,
of indeterminate gender but determined to descend
from the clear blue sky,
prepared to stalk its next dinner,

and then we notice a starling
under the picnic table,
amounting to a watcher, sitting very still
and awaiting the early worm.

Give as Good as You Get

Forget your letter of the law.
Make yourself a list:
Subscribe to a magazine on martial arts.
Read a good war novel.

Discipline yourself. Start by, say, folding paper.
Design a nice floral print.
Read a hundred pages of Proust.
Keep your mouth shut.

Place a Taoist text under
your pillow at night, a thin
volume with unknown title.
Something about nature, definitely alluding to trees.

Open the volume cautiously.
Do you feel more confident that you
understand a word or two?
(Don't kid yourself. You're no writer.)

Kiva

Every day he returned from the foundry,
took seven kernels of grain,
and chanted a prayer to shield
them from hell's minions.

Then he turned to the
spirits of the ancestors, the shapeless
sea of souls that map
the boundaries of all histories, all lives.

He saw a river.
He saw a road into the sky.
He saw cloud-dancers run, gleaming,
singing, from one state to another.

In his vision, every road
vanished from the territory.
Every plan was revoked, and every
wall dissolved into gray mist.

Do, Please, End This Event!

In this heat, the bridesmaids are
passing out, the heavy
ones anyway. Get something icy, and just
maybe they'll live through it.

Though you're applying all your mint to
try to mask the odor,
you must know that our oxygen
will eventually run out.

I have a dream: pure,
clean air, where we can respire;
soft, gentle breezes that
neutralize all this steam.

The stench is enough
to suffocate a Komodo dragon.
We're trying to swim upstream,
to put toothpaste back in the tube.

Susurrous

"You'll burn in hell!"
I quickly hid the bottle
and repented my susurrous Catholic upbringing,
those endless hours of church and school

intended to convert heathen children,
but in the end
leading nowhere but a hut
within which germinates a next-generation Luther.

Each tableau is of a piece,
being both refined and primitive,
finally equating romance with fantasy,
yet feeling none too romantic.

The sermon, no matter the maker,
being no match for the iron logic
imbued in the single-minded penis,
never distracted one from masturbation.

Virtualization

Designed to bring comfort and overcome
fear of the dentist,
this device also doubles as an easel,
making most transitions fairly easy.

The crazy splash of electric gadgets that
fall haphazardly around the room,
the general absence of fireside chats,
the strangely sticky floor –

a house, not a home.
Your music is too loud. Even
admitting that more sex
is your goal, there are still history,

physics, and all the
rest of the traditionally respected fields of
knowledge, the usual university departments.
As you leave, please close the window.

Degrees of Desire

Lake Tahoe's shoreline circumference is 72 miles.
A concert may last 27 hours.
A fairy penguin weighs 1 kilogram;
a small fox, 4.

You could have 150 friends.
A toroidal bucket, even when full,
still has a hole in it.
But never mind about that.

A community fork, or open orb,
can be shared by dining philosophers
sitting around a pentagon of
radius not exceeding the open sector.

The mystery of Stonehenge is revealed
when the sun forms
a right triangle with the Earth, of
diameter equal to one astral unit.

Petrichor

The forest dawn is colored lucid
mint, for just a moment.
It forgets the muddy tracks of spring,
and – as the towhee's plaintive

call rings out ethereally, invisibly, somewhere far
off to the west, sonic
purity mixing with dawn-color – in memory
brings back the snow.

Scrub-jays store their seeds,
and in the stream riparian spirits spin
their supple tunes. All are
in the moment, an opaque window.

How the taste of sour
soup lingers in the mind! And
dreams of outer space
still beckon a new generation of explorers.

The Existence of Evil

As fair as a golden Dorset summer,
so dark is the mood
of the grisly demon, swirling amidst
fog, seeing but unseen,

a demon with a mind
to make someone miserable, secretly planning,
shrouded in the mist
of morning. As its evil plan

takes shape, the nimbus
darkens further, perpetually darkening, until glowering eyes,
burning yellow, are the only sign
of lurking evil. A chilling

storm, an icy hurricane, is forming
behind the cloaking sunshine
in this peaceful valley. Despite its power,
evil has no visibility.

Offing

The morning star rises like a diamond
from a dustbin, or
a very small flower that is
somehow disappointed with its lot.

Remember our old childhood game? Match the
number of pennies? Pennies save,
pennies spend, pennies borrow, pennies blue,
pennies steel, pennies rent.

Hearts now turned to stone,
we all steel ourselves, determined to
convince the old parishioners
to remain calm, to hold fast their

faith that will deliver
them from sin, as the epistle promises.
So pull up your socks,
and buckle your quaintly cobbled shoes.

Mondegreen

After they decided I was a plain bumpkin,
out of place in the city and
lacking the refinements of Europe –
fitter for plowing a field –

they ordered me to tend
the garden, the park and the topiary.
Pining like an island girl,
I trimmed and dug and moped.

Then a nice old woman
saw me working in the park,
and, being rural herself (actually,
a native of Poland), she listened to

the sad tale of how I
came to mind scenery.
We two agreed, after discussion, that nobody
wants sheep in the wheat.

Homage to Loloma

Yes, it's cow country, but
only some own guns.
For every Little Britches or Cattle Annie,
for every Wild Bill or Jesse,

there's a whole herd of people
with no interest in cattle
or guns, many of whom take "Injun
Joe" with righteous indignation.

Charles could see the lasso as
a pattern in space, leather as
a curving surface, muck
as potential shape. No outfit necessary,

just simple prairie garb.
Maybe he could shoot or maybe not,
knew something about a ranch
or maybe not. Not like on television.

Concilliabule

Students hyperextend their brains for an exam.
The hour of truth is
at hand, the month of truth
is now, is now.

No escaping the rain this
Thursday, the rain of terror. Yes,
the day of truth
is at hand, followed by Spring Break.

A life of fakery,
a long, phony, dismal life of crime.
Now the week of truth
is right at hand, is inescapable,

is no longer open to cajolery.
The month of truth
is May, the day is Thursday.
It is, in fact, quite hot.

Thoughts Are Things, Things Are Thoughts

A world or a universe
could be a wish.
And so we seek truth in abject terror
at the possibility of error.

This idea is only a red herring.
Impressionism has taught us something:
The mare and stallion are convenient
symbols that we revere,

but the over-arching maker is
a simple merchant of serviceable tools.
There was never any
intention to install police among our words.

How sweetly we relax,
just thinking that our convenience towers
over rocks and atoms. Our wet wonder
justifies saying what seems nice to us.

Forearm

A superfluous genuflection is no longer amiss,
given the exceptionally strong leadership.
For self-improvement, take time to read
Pound, Stein, Miss Moore.

Further education is optional and
may include hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen.
There are multiple opportunities
to gain, by luck, the upper hand.

Late night efforts, certainly,
nice appearances aside, may influence the authorities,
but one night is enough.
One and done. Don't be sycophantic.

If fatigue sets in, some peppermint
will provide immediate relief.
A bottle of Schnapps will suffice. (No ice.)
All work and no play, you know.

Copying Decisions

Archimedes, pensive in his bubble bath,
as buoyant as a barge,
his gray and studious noggin nodding
against a sort of cushion,

did not know a cake from a
carburetor, a goat from a
sailboat. Cement was still being stirred
with a plaster paddle.

He once sponsored a swim
(did an impressive body of work for
charity, also including a
paper parade). The wise engineer noticed

a thin film of ice
that partially glazed the moat. It seemed
strategically opportune to launch a
silent river raft against the enemy.

Ginglyform

Don't let your temporarily weakened condition
hinder your search for solutions.
A word to the wise is
not easily taken back.

In this breakwater town, you're
damned lucky to find a current.
Don't let that drain
your will to live. It's a drip

in a turbulent tide.
Along comes a tube of the right
stuff and, if the traffic's light,
that tide will turn –

what seemed an unimaginably sticky,
tangled path suddenly slickens up.
Your forward progress becomes, in a word,
inevitable. Victory at hand! Easy!

Small at the Bottom, Large at the Top

Eventually it becomes necessary to leave
the wee man behind.

He is bitter. Who can blame him?
Offer him a bluebell blossom,

or a cut dandelion – save his face,
albeit frustrated and effeminate. Say!
I'm famished! How about some pie?
That's a good girl.

That reminds me – the leaf
of that pink lily out front
has begun to curl. Into the river
with that silly tree!

We'll get a pansy
to replace it. Who cares about people?
Ah, sweet smell of summer!
We are in for a power-shower.

The Opposite of Order

Yes, I am as high as pessimists
get, full of worldly science,
although when dim, I must admit
tomorrow is a job.

So, come to our house,
where the hand of eternity appears
around the noon hour.
If we plan as carefully as possible,

we'll capture a star.
Well, I don't know the specific tactics,
but I work the silvery threads
a few months ahead of schedule,

thereby appearing to be almost clairvoyant.
In time, concessive love
can pay its way out and then decide
what I might not know.

Lygerastia

A movie: a herd of yellow
zebra, each extending its
long neck to look back, as though
John Cage were looking back

through the trees of Twentieth Century music.
The trafficking in modern music
approaches the level of illegal lion
and elephant trading, although

the metaphor wears somewhat thin
as we extend it to tigers.
Try getting a leg up,
or at least into a scissor

position. Inside the ring,
they showed some reserve as we approached
the hippopotamus habitat, some reverence
for Jack Charlton (1966 World Cup).

Campaign

Starting out as a woman, but becoming
a schoolgirl, excessively concerned with
money, her whole attitude was unbecoming of
a female – too masculine.

In a whirl, the life
at school was just too much for
Jeanie. She got thinner
while her friends all got fat.

She was also too tall,
but she knew how to move in
a supple way, looking happy,
her shining eyes in a curl.

In a short skirt, looking up
at an imaginary moon,
she made you think, "What the fuck?"
Always she was blue.

The Pogonotomy of a Philosophunculist

In the bed of the lake
lies all good flesh.
There is grease enough down below
to feed every human fool.

Loose the vipers of Ely, let
them hiss, chant, and gnash.
Let them eat that which lies
like turds down below.

Add the sauce of lechery.
Choose someone for the dance, and
tempt with tasty food
the little ones who risk their necks.

All is gooseberries and
the thrill of the chase. All is
shooting the birds and risking
the noose. Poachers all are we!

Two-Dollar Treat

Stand around, then sit down. Drink your
pretty little cup of tea,
act your sodding age, and say
your pretty little piece.

Pray for pretty little peace.
Heaven help the merciless sinner, the
good girl, and noble
Lord Maurice. (He of all the suitors

brought a worthy bauble.)
Feminine gentleness was his strongest suit, and
at the blackboard he wrote
300 times, "I mount to nothing.

I am a pill. I quit."
Religion is nothing without
sin. The dainty dancer is nothing, indeed,
without the music, the drums.

Just Happy to Have a History

He tried to do them some small
favor, a second sixpence,
a penny past its prime,
or maybe one of orange.

He missed the moon by a mile.
The mission was simply incomplete.
Though the effort was surely full-hearted,
the fare was less

than expected, by a dozen.
In the land of the demi-dead,
the better circle said,
"Set all your clocks back an hour."

What? A semi-crown?
Half a measure is better than none.
Set your damned price and back off!
You'll never get three-quarter pound!

Which Fish Is Caught?

Sooner or later it's time to leave.
Drive in that last nail,
and tie off that last stitch.
The old ball game.

A bird is not free
to peck idly at whipped cream.
A player will feel
moderately confident when holding a short flush,

but a loaded gun!
It's getting hold of one of those
that makes a man feel
the world is well in hand.

"Get a grip," they sometimes say,
along about five o'clock.
Dust off the cuff. Straighten the collar.
Head on over the bridge.

What Is Coriander?

Well, it's hard to say, these
days, to rely upon
anyone, or to take up a cause
that perhaps one couldn't finish.

It might be fun harpooning jelly, or
stalking the small gray doe
in hopes of glimpsing her fawn.
(Sex takes place quickly,

once, not often.) It is
of interest to note how rarely,
along the highway, you
see an accident and stop to help.

John might have, maybe,
long ago, but it seems less likely
today. It all came unraveled
yesteryear, in the distant past.

The Feeling of Fiction

In former times I'd have been content
to spend day after day
with nothing and nobody to laugh
at, like a peanut

that's finally gone bad. Up
on Mount Everest, expecting to see
the face of God,
or at least the face of good,

I met this guy,
this incredible guy, who ended up
helping me out of a jam.
He knew many a pleasant melody,

and I spent a memorable Xmas
with this unflappable wanderer.
He cured the sick, but cursed himself.
Didn't like talking about it.

Lagniappe

Fall into bed. Get back up.
Close the Venetian blinds.
You'll be lodging here for weeks, so
enjoy the room and board.

Think twice before going out and courting
the girl next door. Whatever
happens, you'll find her father's extortionate –
he's a flat-out crook.

At the front desk, whether
at the Hilton or the Savoy,
they have jobs available,
such as maid, handyman, doorman, or waitress.

Fall into paradise, and
stay for a meal. This isn't exactly the
Costa del Sol. You were expecting wine?
Rioja, perhaps? Fat chance.

A Brush with Fun

Who wants to fly when you can
take the train? An hour
in the dining car, the minutes
you can spend dozing,

the comics you can take along
and read – any of this just
beats the band! The
endless drift of historic sites!

There's no limit to
what you can learn during your passage.
Every view is present tense,
every daydream longer than life itself.

Nine hours late on an eight-hour run?
Sure, it's slow,
but so is the turning of the tide.
Look! Here comes a tunnel!

Cynosure or Dalliance?

When I was growing up, I
sensed things were unfair.
All the time, in fact, I felt
very, very strongly, I think.

“To begin at the beginning,” said Dad,
“let it finish itself. Leaving
her is callous, but marrying her
would probably be cruel.”

“Go, man!” responded young Jim.
He had taken out the trash,
like legal justice itself,
and had not come in soon enough

to hear the two of us
wrapping up our discussion.
Jim was of a true, upright
nature, yet knew nothing of life.

Verse, Verse, Refrain

He had upon his back a spade
that never arch had seen.
He came upon us all as weird,
as Arthur had been.

One of us bad boys
o'erleapt the castle's foamiest rinsing moat.
The rest braved death,
shielding from harm our good King Henry.

Withal, the king as jester
went disguised, clad in clownish rags,
as even peasant would disdain
and stalwart serf put to taunt.

Through all the shire the word
spread like stomach flu –
the would-be tyrant's japing form in flight
from a spade-armed villain, sooth.

Necessary Science

Become personally aware of the sources
of your own belief.
Be certain of your foundations, no more
tossing darts in the dark.

Revise the dictionary to achieve a modicum
of clarity, at least enough
to catalog the facts as fast
as we forget them.

It must be abstract, like
love – the love of fried chicken.
It must be mind
and much, much more than merely mind.

Personally assure the children
that we can say something about sources.
Teach that this is what
we call “TV of the Sacrosanct.”

Waiting for *Waiting for Godot*

There are always second thoughts afterwards
in basketball, a game of inches.
What if he had fallen forward?
Life would be different.

If not now, when? Is
there no date certain for review?
Often we hear it said,
“Yes, there is no date certain for review.”

It's too late now.
Sure, everyone wants a free lunch, but
someone has to pay, at least
sometimes: This is the moral.

It is night, and now
the physics of the cricket's chirp
blends with other motivic structures,
as the evensong emerges.

Beliefs

What is it to be in
condition to have beliefs?
How can our myriad beliefs exist together,
a French Quarter of sorts?

Then again, think of the time taken
to complete the design, blueprinting
earth, air, fire, ethanol, and water ...
food, for that matter.

Beliefs are fun, and memories
of past home life, completing the
design, bringing it round
to a nice, clean, well-balanced scheme. We

sleep the sleep of
love, the sleep of the well-balanced scheme.
We eat well, with intent,
and we breathe as never before.

Aught Baldric

It was a dream holiday, not to
be missed at all costs.
It was in need of a
lifetime to pine for.

Indeed, perhaps most would strive
or wish for such a holiday,
not to say ache,
or even crave. Worthy folk could live

forever and never achieve
a stretch of such heavenly bliss; chances
are nil that mere mortals,
who lust after Vegas entertainment and

go to great pains to find
the stage-shows that please,
who otherwise plod their sad, neuropathic lives,
would ever get a lakeside cabin.

Cabinette

Dear world, would anyone today be
frightened to get up and go?
When anyone in this neighborhood
hears a child's plaintive cry,

as perhaps in fear, they will spring
into action and find a
way through the jungle, or through
the office, to help.

Yes, world, we are insecure.
Yes, many of us are in debt.
Like a stone doll
in the desert, we cast about

for the cause, the
hole in the boat, so to speak.
But anyone with the sense
of sheep gets up and goes.

The Provender of Mews: A Seasonal

Making nice people late for the passion play,
playing with their affections –
all really one scene, one story:
Another soft, womanly spring.

Womanly scent with free warmth,
God's long-promised gift to the tribe.
Happiness of lovely Kay,
idealism of John, the faithful lover.

Emotion seems immanent in the air,
April weather at the end
of July. Fluffy female feelings abound
as the first fruits of summer.

There is bird juice
in Rex Manor, cherished in kind.
When John kisses dear Kay,
her pleasure is like a reward.

Connections

As big as it seems now,
the dinosaur bone could
be traded for some apples. I think
this is the bathroom pattern.

It's too white for the living room.
A black car denotes class,
maybe even conceit. The class structure
has no significant cracks.

Most "classy living" magazines show
a kind of mirage view, a
mirror of vanity hiding
a nasty tale that can't be discussed.

A queen shaver is
insufficient for the rear self, not
allowing for reflective seeing. The sea
is vast, a wrapping-room sea.

Adoxography

This may be just a phase in
the operation of popular culture,
exactly like a bad program in
a computer – a road

less taken to conduct or revere
the rite of free speech,
a habit in stereo,
a hat held together with duck tape.

This may be a manner
of modern gossip that just happens to
fit the mood today,
that will, like a network node,

be replaced tomorrow by another excrescence.
Thus, popular operations of
Paris culture drag the weary world along
according to their adoxographic patterns.

The Big Dance

It had an air of intrigue,
of abstracted wonder, and
a certain adventurous voice, in other words,
an unusual aura and allure.

It was black and unsolved, a
trip-box of possible traps and snares,
like an old castle tale, with
a choice of stormy nights.

It evoked the cycle of
science and death peculiar to this genre,
as inexplicable as Parliament,
like an old fairy tale.

An odd game unfolded,
like a ghost in the night, a
living ghost named Mick, who
poured out the magic from it.

Reft and Riven

Call Alison, Ann Bond, Annie, Christian, Don:
No direction why these labels
gave them all false fame. Drat
this fellow they sent!

He was the first to
lie and dissemble, turning
against his closest friends.
He left his girlfriend behind and denied

verification of her identity.
His initial impulse was to lie, just ask
Julia, Paul, Peter, or Roger Shaw.
None of them was strong enough

to broach the subject of deceit.
Surround Susan with Tom,
he stays as white as the driven.
Who speaks on his behalf?

Be Beautiful

Never could a bird be beautiful
in a home where
an egg sits like Pharaoh at
the head of the table.

The bed of the beautiful is never
the best to be trusted,
nor yet the chair of the
comely. They traveled

far from the East, and
each had his game to play.
Each wanted a girl.
Each hoped to sire his own hive.

The goal was matrimony,
to put it in a nutshell. Go
and seek your wisdom, Owl.
The robin's tree remains twig-warm.

Medaglia D'Oro

Among us there was a bond,
a core of common values.
That we acted as a jury
should engender no surprise.

We kept a secret book
to chronicle our several "court cases."
Just as a legion
swears allegiance, we pledged ourselves to Truth.

Both kindness and justice
were given short shrift. We cursed God
and man as a ritual.
We trusted no faith or credo.

By touching the Medallion of Gold,
each promised his everlasting soul
to hell, as solemn as a vicar,
should he break his vow.

Fact, Fear, and Form

In his youth it was time,
above all, that was
plentiful. Every occurrence seemed to require
only time to come right.

As he acquired some experience, he noticed
now and then that conditions
recurred, and sometimes when they did,
harmful things would happen,

things that time's passage didn't heal.
It never entered his tiny mind
that the round world
could disown him, that he should heed

his uncle's prediction that,
sooner or later, inevitable changes would appear,
sometimes without any logical basis,
and would take place without remorse.

Imbrications

This is the age of age. Everyone
wants to buy second-hand antiques.
Here's a painting of a man,
gaunt, with bushy beard.

Here's a boy of five.
Here's a knight. The likeness is
poor, but it's well-worn
and being tarnished, as good as gold.

For decline and death,
please pick another one of the pensioners.
It's not me, not yet,
not my turn to go stiff.

Absent-minded as a child, remember to
tip the maid. It's
lonely at the end, especially if your
car hits an ugly tree.

Skylight

In another word, alien, a being
as yet unfamiliar, a
thing as remote as time's mother,
far away from the hand

that seems so comfortably attached to me.
A self, possibly, but only
by some benefit of the doubt –
not man or woman –

not by half! Though it
says its name is "Gavin," so ...
In the first place,
all of us need to feel we're

members of the club.
In the second place, we're all brothers
in any broader cosmic sense,
like maybe in some alternate reality.

Our Common Condition

She tended a flower garden of sorts
near a kind of avenue.
Every driver, as they passed, admired
her version of Eden.

There was a park swing;
this made everything seem even finer.
And now and then,
as the mud began to peel,

a public ranger wandered by,
like a royal minion. In the sun
up beyond Victoria, near Whitworth,
no one claimed to walk on water,

no one was anointed football warden.
In the tree room,
up a bit and to the right,
you could have a view.

Pacific Daylight Time

A man somebody knew (maybe nobody),
a rush to proof,
a plea from a nice woman for
us to love one another,

rather than engaging in sometimes criminal relationships.
Who knows a goblin by
its first name? Who actually groks
the horrors of prison?

That kind of rank individuality
could only belong to Parson Persona,
our omnibus Christ figure,
who is widely berthed as kind of

a gruff old guy.
A few tolerated him well enough.
One girl knew him a slight amount,
whereas many knew him not.

Fugacious Embers

Something old about daffodils dancing at play –
a line from someone I
was told was the ultimate poet.
I once read the

beautiful work of a writer
named Leonard Cohen. Another time I
had to scan and
drag my way through some palsied drivel,

with no rhyme scheme
and no aesthetic value that would rise
above the basest self-tangled root
on the tree of prose.

This was at university: one epic,
one gem of rubbish,
one masterpiece of musical or visual rhythm
that an abnormal person crafted.

The Early Gurus

As a child, Daz produced little.
Teen years, equally shambolic.
Mainly groceries, food, videos, detergent or soap-powder.
No attempt to make society better,

no golden mean, no happy solution,
no thrust to obtain synthesis,
no fresh output type of thing.
In time of war, however,

he ventured to think
a bit beyond the wall of merchandise
and work the math,
as it were, toward real achievements.

Copulation, marriage, and multiplication.
He even became a national economic manager.
He proved himself capable, though nothing
impressive happened after the war.

Examples

Now it's up to you: You want
honest work, or mere recipes?
You may yet eat your words,
some sentences for translation.

Just some examples from school.
Nonsense! We're not talking about poetry.
It doesn't need rhymes.
Look, insert something here more like Proust,

a passage with pronouns,
some more literary, more inspired,
like an essay, "German Expressionism."
Like Chaucer in English composition class.

Look, here's where the cauliflower goes.
It hasn't got a manual.
That's actually the beauty of the thing.
Just set it to spin-dry.

Sweat Bee

"¡Ay, carajo! ¡Mi Chihuahua fue tokenized!"
Verónica exclaimed, obviously distressed.
Memories that clouded her love of Spain
had come hard of late,

dropping like leaves in the forest,
almost bringing her to tears.
The weather was unusually bad.
We heard cold thunder

as we rode the train
up to the Lake District from
Leicester. As we traveled past
Stoke-on-Trent and Blackpool, it stayed unseasonably

wet, and certainly the
chill of the day, even at noon,
did little to comfort her.
Droplets continued dancing atop the carriage.

Kakorrhaphiophobia

Descartes offers the logos of sharp finality.
His wit remains indisputable,
resulting in total banishment of emotion.
Madness is no alibi.

Place your faith in mathematics;
do with it what you will.
Skeins of mystical revelation
will never be able to answer questions

about the necessary facts.
To glean true insight and wisdom,
to rhyme causal force with
cosmic purpose, requires that we strive

to pass beyond history. Who can explain
this season of apathy?
Who can explain by what excuse
people brush aside the truth?

Hedge Your Best

In a lone rowboat you can
follow the meandering flow
until it comes to a winding
bend up near the new

Trent Bridge. Continue on out to the
estuary. This season it will be
wearing fresh green rushes.
Take out upstream of the mouth.

Dee and Don from Humber
live with their brats a little
way from Mersey-Forth,
in the direction of Jordan's Gorge.

Look for the old stone house.
It's a dreamy setting,
on a route to the high plains,
sheltered from Severn's sweeping flood.

Cause Certain

A few sweet apples spoil the radiogram.
I knew what they wanted.
I knew what they were after.
Thin, thin, thin. Faking

the ability to appoint officials,
even the so-called elected elite, but
they bribed me with
a state-of-the-art computer, carefully

boxed in a bar,
then set themselves up to take over
society and switch the records.
They had me gather the team

together to make a new gearbox
for the next rally;
then several plush or posh seats
mysteriously disappeared at the Petit Palace Opera.

Death Do Us Part

Buskers ahoy! This is the celebration
you've been waiting for!
Put on your morning eyes and ogle
this picture. Do you recognize

the adder lung? Well, it's the new
logo for a trendy line
of cabinetry, upholstery, appliances, and
elegant white sunshine lamps.

Go play on the cliffs.
Dodge the umbral image till
death do us part.
Study the storm graph, and warily avoid

the school of doubt.
Keep a shapely figure till you hear
a dull pop, the
pale omen of night, past fear.

Dulcet Ebullience

If ever the short flutes gave off
a smell of dulcet ebullience,
this was our chance to see it,
and it was dreadfully shrill

to the ear. There was
something about the field where we
stood, its iron horizon,
that blocked the vision of the seers.

It is, however, a
terrible thing to lose your mind.
Any taste, however bitter, can
lead to some kind of insight –

maybe not leading in a straight line,
but things touch eventually.
Eventually we get used to it; grudgingly,
some claim to enjoy it.

Clear Changes

A system guide for gazers to
map me a nova,
clear changes visible in dust far distant,
and, above all, bright imagination.

The night sky is a wall
of glitter, with patterns like plays
in a football game.
Out to the southwest twinkles The Garter Snake.

Julie Andrews wishing on a Telstar would
be my ideal, or some
Lawrence of Algol or Aries, orating
every morning, noon, and night.

Inspiring every other pop-song
and five out of ten country classics,
we know somehow they're gazing
back, across the galaxy, at us.

A Different Education

A moment, please. Curb your manly bark.
Please try not to talk.
Shrubs are not your field,
nor insects my expertise.

It seems that a bird fell,
or it could have been
a fruit-shrew. They build
their hives in the upper boughs

and in pine branches.
The life-cycle goes from elm to
ground to wall or fence
or hedge-line. Sometimes the shrew may

appropriate a rosebush that was originally
planted for a cat.
In any case, growing only two inches tall,
they hardly dominate the landscape.

Wafture

No use looking all around town
for food and drink.
The place to be is Hamburger Heaven.
Over moor and mountain road,

finding one perfect tree to climb, or
trudging blandly through thick woods,
searching far towns and villages, the
lonely lanes of life.

Clouds playing out no mind,
heedless of the hillside homes, our
idle journeys round the
curves, highways down to narrow paths

where dreaming drifters
go rambling through fields full of fast food.
Here we find German burgers.
There we see Masala Pepsi Cola.

Titular Development

The whole family applauded a successful arrival
at the beach, cheering the
ebb and flow, the ocean's hearty
"fee fie foe fum."

They took time to genuflect,
waving the handkerchief of thanks and
broadcasting a reverent "Hullo!"
on the divine radio waves. The cold,

wet wind made a
kinky pattern of the scattered bull-kelp.
There was not quite the
heat they hoped to greet. Never mind.

This is what they came for:
The rippling, sinusoidal tide,
the curl of surf pounding the hard-packed sand,
the raucous honking of a polka band.

In Good Hands

The Gorgonzola flashed its teeth at Clyde,
and that's when he said,
"I don't think it knows about elevenses.
Just look at the bones!"

Well, all my adult life I had heard
"an eye for a leg."
It's well and good to shed
tears for the dead,

but we had borne enough,
we had indeed been through fire
and stepped on coals,
all just to stay awake.

Fall down, lazy man,
and sit some woman's work in this
man's world. Think it over.
Your best answer will be "yes."

A General Law

"Wee-wee!" noted a baby bear, and answering
darkness echoed, and the north wind whistled.
The curtain opened on a reading-room.
The sound of voices!

Evans knew nothing of fear.
From the side of his mouth
he spoke a low
"Psst! Sh!" And in silent softness the

gallery groaned with weighty,
dusty books, most of them about law.
"A general law calls for
a general lawyer. Isn't that clear?"

The sound of a wish, but
no words were heard,
as the dark-bearded scholar pored over tomes
dense with turns of phrase.

Arguments for Art

If everyone were a Leonardo da Vinci,
there'd be no art/science problem.
No clouds about it,
Ian was a bad boy,

and Jill was a very good girl,
known for her lovely beauty.
They lived and loved in
the land of ice cream.

For a time there were
trees, a time of gay bliss,
and a happy home.
Everyone was delightful, and they all enjoyed

sunshine and pleasant woods.
Then the spurious sun turned terribly blue
(a brief experience, but *paralysante*,
and a sight for sore sleep).

Remote Release

If some happened to be happy, temporarily
free of anger, without an
element of fear, the symphony of
a suddenly ripe strawberry

or a perfect wedding gift
might astonish them almost in a good
way, not frightening them
or filling them with inexpressible disgust.

So, aghast at last
at the commercial Christmas games, the holiday
spirit jumped lightly here and
there among the hard-working pea people.

With great amazement at the unlikely
Ka-pow! of this attack,
they were startled by the shock and
thrill of an unexpected treat.