



EVERYDAY POEMS FOR CITY SIDEWALK

POETRY COLLECTION
2008-2013



2013

SUSAN DOWNING

It is not carelessness
to leave a poem
lying around

CHARLES MATSON LUME

Hard candy of love—
what if I bite
down
a little?

SUSAN OLSSON

If your dog married my dog
we would be related
and I would bring you meals
when you were ailing
and insist that you come out with me
to simply sniff the air.

PAIGE RIEHL

Dragonfly

You are soul-weigher, tiny
devil's horse, doctor
of snakes. You are strength
of late summer, double-barred
cross of courage and speed,
rendered flightless
with two pebbles
and a string
of child's hair.

MARCY STEINBERG

Haircut

Fool that I was with my scissors
I have nothing left to offer
The warm spring breeze

2012

JAMES LACHOWSKY

Benny & Shrimp

Can a lady in the library
with butter on her tongue
Appreciate the farmer
Spending hours spreading dung?

DONNA DAMALFI

The cat danced across the noon-day sun
to a stutter of front porch boogie
hot feet playing the floor.

KAREN TRUDEAU

Remember how you ignored me
after I spent a recess stamping
your name in the snow?
Yet, after 30 years of marriage,
I notice how you smile
every time it snows-
every time.

EMILY GURNON

Don't buy me dinner on my birthday
and then tell me
you're too tired
to dance.

ALMA PALAHNIUK

The Sweater

My mom knitted it out of water,
We washed it in a fire for me,
And whenever I wear it I boil.

2011

MICHAEL MURPHY

I can't remember
all the flowers she taught me.
Her pansies worry.

LILLIAN RUPP

He's fat
My fault
No Walks

MICHAEL RUSSELLE

Four feet tall and poised,
glove on, front row, third base line,
yearning for the foul.

SARAH CLARK

Evening Chores

When the door claps its frame
the goat runs as if I were
bringing the world instead
Of rotting squash. His
strong teeth search
me for more – gently
As if he couldn't bear to know
that one world is all I have
to feed him –
and one is not enough.

LOUIS DISANTO

Life magazines for shin guards.
Skates too big, stick cracked and old,
jacket patched and tattered.
I ignored the smirks and winter's cold,
love of hockey was all that mattered.

2010

PAT OWEN

A dog on a walk
is like a person in love –
You can't tell them
it's the same old world.

DALLAS CROW

Tadpoles

A boy, skinny legs pale
as peeled willow, pedals
to his favorite pond, pole
in hand. Years until he dates,
he desires only slime, slop,
the fish and frogs of his secret spot.

RACHEL KOWARSKI

"You are not very
stable," said the frog
to the lily pad.
"And you," the lily pad
replied, "have very cold feet."

KEVIN WALKER

A puddle,
where a moth
can shake the sky.

JERI REILLY

Tonight
in the dark kitchen
only the stainless steel sink
holds the moon.

2009

MARY DAVINI

Play me a song Trumpet Man
Sorrow sings deep in my bones
I ache to feel it out loud
Wail, Trumpet Man
Drown this city in brassy tears
Beat in my blood
Pump the anger and hurt out my heart
Wash it away in the slippery sewer
Swirl it down down in your long last note
Leave me standing alone, empty and free

KURT SCHULTZ

Whippets love wombats and cheaters love rules,
like canaries love cats and truants love school.
Earthworms drink tea from fine china cups,
and ponies give birth to white lab pups.
You can see from your ears and smell from your eyes
and you'll always succeed if you never try.

MARIANNE MCNAMARA

November

Autumn winds drag leaves from the trees,
clog the streets in dreary finale.
Bare branches crisscross the heavy sky.
Icy rain spatters, ink-blot the pavement.
I settle at the window, stare into the black flannel,
search the woolly lining of the night for winter.

ANNA EVERETT BEEK

I wanted to tell you the name of the street
where I crashed my bicycle, got my best scar
or how I went walking at sunrise, a treat
to see dawn's great evacuation of stars.
There must be some method, when two people meet,
to explain to each other who we really are.

PAM HAAS

There's no place I'd rather be
than here
in this quite common place
where late morning sun
meets the scent of concrete and cut grass
stirring

EYANG WU

A little less war,
A little more peace,
A little less poor,
A little more eats.

SASHA ASLANIAN

the robins

we notice them in the yard
our first spring
a couple searching to build
mud and snarls of straw
over the back door
sacred blue eggs inside

next year they come back
and choose the front door
than the garage
flattered
we never dismantle the safe places of
ten springs

KATE LYNN HIBBARD

Advice for Gardeners

Accept brevity.
Celebrate decay.
Emancipate failed growth, hope
it'll just keep living. Mulch
near odd places. Quit raking.
Sleep.
Tend unlimited variegated words.
Xerox your zucchini.

CALEY J. CONNEY

Bad Day

The red lid unscrewed
from the jar of extra crunchy
almost empty
and the full, mounded spoon
half shoved in my mouth
says it all –
I don't want to talk.

Steal It

Go.
Feel the rush.
Speed.
Take off.
The throw.
The catch.
The slide...
...Safe.

GEORGIA A. GREELEY

Tipping The Scales

I don't know enough
about balance to tell you
how to do it

I think, though,
it's in trying
and letting go

that the scales measuring
right and wrong – quiver
and stand still

ELEANOR ARNASON

Bus Poem

A man loads his home-
two carts stuffed full of stuff-
on the bus.

Two of us move back.
A third helps with the carts.

A man's got a right to room and help
when his whole home
in on the bus.

MARGARET HASSE

Medowlark Mending Song

What hurt you today
was taken out of your heart
by the medowlark
who slipped the silver needle
of her song
in and out of the grey day
and mended what was torn.

Origami Bird

You have great long wings to fly
Why do you sit still?

TIROWS BYRD

Interloper

On a delicate pappus you rose
Alighted on turf, seeming benign;
Locked into bedrock with pointed toes
Stretched lemon head to the sun.
Hydras, you dodge the mower blade.
I whack you with a spade for fun.
Fine! Senseless to fret.
I'll transmute gold locks into wine
And eat your children with vinaigrette.

CARLEE TRESSEL

Second Love

He kissed the girl
in the ballerina skirt.
It was a long one-
like the kiss-
drenching her sneakers
in tulle.

ANNA RENKEN

Cutout Sky

Cut the trees
out of the sky
with your silver
scissors.

Tear the rain
from the faint
shapes of bruised
clouds with your open
hands.

Weave the thin
strands of rain
through the branches
like pearls
melting against dark
silhouettes.

ANNE PIPER

Not like fire

Nothing flaming
or even
potentially
aflake.

Nothing
caught up
with danger.
Nothing racing to take
control
or possessions or
no prisoners.

No, our love
was never
like that.

NAOMI COHN

Dementia

I reach for a name, a song, a tune
and memories scatter,
minnows fleeing
a toothy pike.

I catch a few
laggards.
But know these are nothing
to the hundred fish that fled.

ESME EVANS

A tourist
in the cathedral
of your silence
I am reverent
for all the wrong
reasons

DIEGO VAZQUEZ JR.

The sky
fell on
my
toes
and
I was
a fast
runner.

ZOE JAMESON

Wet cement,
Opportunity.
It only takes a second
To change this spot forever.

PATRICIA KIRKPATRICK

Fishing Opener

Pine siskins and goldfinches persist
at the feeder.
A loon unravels a tremulous call.
Boys who yesterday bagged groceries
in small towns
have been out in their boats since four,

THEIR LINES HUNG DOWN IN BROODY SWATCHES

of brown and green water.
The last of the night's rain drips
from branches. Fog
casts further and further from shore.
The hills have no opinion.
The dock, planked and grey as newspaper,
enters the lake without intention.
Wind ripples the water like erasures.

EILEEN O'TOOLE

She was steward
of the smallest things: pair of dead bees
in the windowsill, Santa ring,
cluster of elm seeds in their felted cells.

SEAN FLEMING

Let's Talk

Said one young man to his young bride,
"I'm so sad my dad just died."
"Let's talk of it," she softly cried.
"Um, I just did," the man replied.

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