

Think of a poem as a recipe.  
After your initial flash - ask  
yourself what this you're making. Is  
this a lemon meringue pie? A  
stew, a stock - a log of bread?  
Decide. What are you cooking here?  
Who is going to eat it? Where will  
it be served? What will tempt  
them to try it and want more?  
Meah tea compared to Bengundy?  
Ingredients one salt, pepper, sugar,  
yeast

prose - antithesis of poetry  
prose can be incorporated into poetry  
can have specific useful functions  
in poetry - it can be used to  
Characterize a person or thing  
to defuse an overcharge of emotion  
to set a simple stage to bear the  
greater weight of the poem  
To distract momentarily for a dazzling  
thrust you're about to deliver  
but all these must be used sparingly  
Briefly before the reader has time  
to say, hey this is prosy.

July 8, 1993

William Whallon, Editor  
Bennett & Kitchel  
P.O. Box 4422

8826

FROM THE DESK OF  
ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL  
AND INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE  
IN THE WORLD

KAREN  
Thursday  
Call Longy

Call drugs re Rogaine

Stony May at Library  
Call Sandberg books  
address for Luthoron Partners

Wilderness at 211 Benedictine

pix to Balchmills - pix to Mrs Creighton

Open House at ~~Adams~~ ~~Self~~ John

Cookbook

Pick up at Evans Soctaid

~~Shop Cooking~~

~~Shop other discount places~~

~~Turkey @ 42¢ - Cranberries~~

Ontario & In Flights

line up sellers for stuff

Call restaurant re Friday  
~~MSG directions~~

Copy John Ciardi's poem  
from LOVING

~~Dish  
Cash~~



Tall John Kinst

"John Dickson - it was the  
poem he judged in FLA  
"O" in smaller OK

~~Tall Bill Snelius re Const-tuite~~  
her brother's eye op was laser  
ask Gause

~~Make appointments Dentist & Gause~~  
~~Thanks to Sharron~~

~~ENSE~~ OEUVRE

Withering

a prison

Oyster

studs like  
bird shot  
on corsof

forms rhyme against void

or wall

bond

surreal

definite

edges

rectilinear geometry

pictographic imagery

seminal

organic

abstract art

---

reality - spirituality

Physical - Metaphysical  
World

abstract expressionism

seeing <sup>newly</sup> philosophy  
not art

Craftsmen  
Fall meat  
gift bows  
Heraldry  
Fondly  
Old  
On Making

commuter tiger  
heraldry

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WATER VOICES ARE OUR OWN

The ultimate medium for words and tones:  
lakes snow creeks dew oceans geysers

Where personal sounds come from where they go  
Hidden springs fog canals frost rain

The unresting place You can hear them all best  
after midnight millions of tongues telling  
their side of it in rivers ice-melt steam

Water collects each story each verse  
and runs with it The human verbal gamut:  
inflected echoed yours hers his mine

Doers dawdlers blessed cursed uncountable  
humans born to thirst for this ubiquitous essential  
compounded hydrogen/oxygen & accessories  
leaching out oddments dissolving disseminating

You can't escape it this unstable substance  
claiming 3/4 of Earth 70% of your body Don't  
think anyone is in charge It goes its own way

Listen to tones rhythms harmonics morphed forms  
Each poem moves in the incompressible carrier  
with Muses Fates Furies rolling pooling lolling  
with sediment laughing at sentiment regaling silt  
battling basalt cutting canyons through jasper  
jostling sand bars conchs & crabs lowering falls

Lyrics bubble in the flow demanding to be heard

Our narratives word the water Water words us

--Glenna Holloway

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A BOWL OF BLUE BLOSSOMS

My delphiniums budded, dolphin-shaped sucklings  
nursing on light, turning light to pigment,  
demanding of me a worthy container,  
a competent complement for perfected blue.

Glass-vased cosmos, bland and blueless, watched  
as my bowl began-- a fat gray coil of earth,  
cold-slimy to my touch, reluctant to accept  
my warmth or my will. I insisted a deep reservoir

to prolong blue. Free of my hands, it rearranged  
its molecules slowly, making no promises,  
shrinking fossil-dry on a shelf. Its dark hollow,  
encased in continental crust, lusted for light.

Graduated from the first fire, country coarse  
as big bucktoothed zinnias in baskets in my studio,  
its rough apprentice-brown drank deeply of unguents  
as I coated its flaws with cool manganese oxides.

In a final revelation it vibrated like a nova,  
orange to white in my kiln, then healed and ripened  
in hereditary heat on its way to indigo. Settled  
down in the world's glazed memories of sky and sea,

it came into its own first flowering today,  
paired with now-pollinated sisters of the soil.  
Their soft spurs brushed its flanks in approval,  
sharing the blue planet's most potent blue.

--Glenna Holloway

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PREMONITIONS  
(Mozart's Concerto in C Minor)

An orchestrated omen interweaves,  
Its net engaging deeper than the ear.  
The mood suggests a person who believes  
His life is playing out, the end is near.  
The pathos is subdued a little while;  
Remembered briefly is the bon vivant.  
Fresh melody evokes a sudden smile,  
And yet the violins make no detente.  
Perhaps he's only demonstrating range;  
Composers often build a tomb motif--  
Harmonic agon isn't new or strange.  
--No, this finale is his own deep grief.  
Resigned to every measured strain of truth,  
The man knows death will take him in his youth.

--Glenna Holloway

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MOD LIT 101

Your choice, I said, a poem, essay, play.  
Use any form you wish, just keep it fresh.  
The subject's been abused enough, so say  
Your feelings in a thought-provoking way.

Distaste and boredom surfaced in their eyes.  
"Ms. Moss, that's hackish unexciting stuff."  
"Too blah." "No meat," were some of the replies.  
Consider it a challenge in disguise:

You'll have to dig and search with inside light,  
Recycle slag, repolish dulling ore  
With diamond grit until it's blinking bright.  
I longed to see one pair of eyes ignite.

They sighed. The subject I assigned was peace,  
Man's old recurring dream, his anguished cry,  
His noblest aim. My students grumped like geese.  
I hoped their finer senses would increase.

This theme might be the turning point, I thought.  
They have the raw material to forge  
Beyond sci-fi and gothic romance caught  
Between truth pangs and all those myths they bought.

And yet they chose antithesis: They wrote  
Of war. As though the obverse scene would burn  
A better image of the goal. I quote:  
"The script for peace is lost," said one footnote.

--Glenna Holloway

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CHEETAH IN A ZOOM LENS  
(*Acinonyx jubatus*)

She ambles past her grazing nervous prey,  
Dark-spotted hunger, simile for speed:  
A chase machine, a disappearing breed.  
Blonde head aloof, she idles, seems to pay  
No heed to shuffling hoofs. She eyes a stray.  
The healthy bucks set off the herd's stampede,  
Releasing her like brakes. Intentions freed,  
She starts her sprint, this cat who hunts by day.

With undulating spine, this specialist,  
Hind quarters pushing fifty-miles-an-hour,  
Soon overtakes the antelope in dust.  
This makes her third attempt; twice now, she's missed.  
She can't always succeed despite her power.  
This time she heard her cubs and knew she must.

CANADA THISTLE  
*Cirsium arvense*

Outlaw. Unwanted in 37 states.  
I'd be abetting a fugitive if I let you  
on my property. But here you're king  
of the backroad. Tall, crowned  
like your House of Stuart relative.  
Flaunting it.

Last week you got in my blood.  
My finger dripped into your own  
reddish center so irresistible to bees  
and wingless feasters  
who must have climbed an hour  
to get there. None of your customers  
seemed put off by my seasoning.

Today you are softer, more expansive.  
A grounded nova, a slow-motion explosion  
of stars. White dwarfs adrift, gleaming  
rays bearing their motives aloft  
for inches or miles. Orbiting  
with their old designs on the dark heavens  
of warm earth.

(I have a spectacular macro lens study of a bee gathering nectar surrounded by thistle seeds leaving the flower.)

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POTATO SECRETS

A week they lay cribbed in the cool  
of my pantry, secure in their symmetry,  
their long Irish lineage. Now they push  
their earth smell into my head,  
an insistent musk reeking of history  
and ethos. Their heft in my hand insinuates  
gravity, longevity, hints of hidden power.

Darkness activated their eyes; pale blips  
poke out of their sockets. My mother says  
these pointed knurls reaching for new life  
must be dug out: they're poison raw,  
they steal flavor if cooked.

No more lazing in warm hills beneath  
urgent green, their future ends in a sack  
hurried past my cat while their bulbous brown  
origins hiss at me from the oven.

And my mother, humming, prepares to anoint  
their hot finality with her own secrets,  
part buttermilk, salsa and chives.

--Glenna Holloway

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ON THE WAY HOME

Horizons fell, hot pieces heaped  
in pyres, night shattered  
in black piles, textures, odors, images  
seared, suspended in inner spaces.

We mine rage in rubble, look for logic,  
magic, rubric in unpracticed venues.  
We breechload rifles with hate,  
arm missiles with rage, stock mouths  
with bile as we plot response.

Questions multiply, echo, hover.  
Looking inside our heads like cave fish  
searching for lost eyes, we lurch  
in this unknown dimension, shiver,  
and plead for something called morning.

Let us approach the altars of justice  
with guided steps, with reverence  
and care. Always remembering--  
God told us vengeance is His.

Glenna Holloway

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THE DISPOSSESSED  
(Equus caballus, feral)

His black tail swishes like ravelings  
of raw silk. His soft whicker builds  
to a snort disturbing the dust. His mares  
move too slowly, heads bowed and bobbing  
as he drives them to the water.  
Scummy hot, it's there for cattle,  
and the gray-spotted mustang knows its source.  
There is no welcome for him and his kind here.

Nervous as a sweat bee, he menaces the mares  
with his teeth, tries to hurry them, nipping  
at flanks, darting after his latest conquest  
wandering wide and listless past the trough.

He smokes with flies.  
Snapping his mane, muscles shivering,  
he shakes their torment off new wounds  
crisscrossing old scars.

Apart, a young rival roan watches  
behind a creosote bush.  
He knows about the dried blood  
on the gray spots he races out to challenge.

Before last light drops below  
the dust-deviled plains,  
the roan wears a redder shine on one flank.  
But the mares, still indifferent, thirsty again,  
are all his.

While another stallion waits until sunrise.

--Glenna Holloway

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MOTHER/DAUGHTER BANQUETS

How long do they last?  
It's been years since I left, a lone moth  
escaping the cakes in your closet.  
Still we feed at these movable feasts.

Mother, your only daughter has prepared  
all your favorites tonight-- wild rice  
and duck, pink champagne, centerpiece  
of mauve asters for our silences to orbit.

Exuberant bubbles fling themselves on linen,  
condensation creeps down cut glass. I pinch  
my words for doneness, taste the seasoning  
before my tongue releases them.

Please, just eat the good things I've made.  
I've sheathed my razor edges, vowed  
not to attack your hands. My voice  
will stay in the alto range tonight.

You sit staring, oily opalescence gaining  
on the entree, the trail of our sentences.  
I smile and touch the flowers: "You once  
made me a velveteen dress that color."

You say you don't remember that at all,  
and purple only reminds you of pain.  
You ignore a second helping  
of my dated tidbits, then sniff

the current kettle, declining the ladle  
designed for your grip.  
After the table is cleared, leftovers  
saved for another venue,

you finger your purse, pick  
at the foil-wrapped roll under your tissues,  
and offer me a broken lozenge  
coated with the lint of love.

--Glenna Holloway

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OF PAINTERS AND PAINTINGS

The old ones knew, the ones called masters--  
revenants in ruddle and ocher, compost  
for composition for the newly damned. They live on  
in owl eyes and refractions of rain. Still knowing.

Secrets steep in centuries of varnish, never lost  
yet seldom found by many-- distracted by  
siren abstraction on scrambled margins of revelation.

And how many Monets wait for the brief bright flux  
of a guided hand-- maybe lingering the length  
of a sable hair? We are legion, forever unknown,  
sweeping the spectrum for lifetimes. Searching,  
bleeding our brushes, shading with lotus that flares  
and fades without the missing medium: Surrender--  
the humility of umber, the infused pulse  
that defies dimensions, even the fourth.

Stretching the palimpsest on points of stars,  
on everything between life and death, light and dark,  
grasped and stroked, stilled but not stillborn--  
this is the goal and the gift:  
Contact and abduction through a painted canvas door.

--Glenna Holloway

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FEVER 104°

This elusive little beast isn't fooling me  
with its cold/hot breath,  
its shivery black silveryness caressing  
me pale and tender. It ripples over my ribs  
like a fur boa teasing me  
along with some perverse audience  
my rheumy eyes can't see. Mouth filled  
with surgical tools for slipping beneath skin  
and sinew, its lancets pause here and there  
to strop on my bones.

I suspected the dreaded basilisk  
when that flicking stickiness tongued over me  
at daybreak. Until I noticed  
its undulating form was less than ugly,  
slenderly sensual, softly mean.  
Warm blooded grace shapes its intentions. This  
is not the basilisk once thought unkillable,  
but the basilisk's own slayer, the weasel.

Whiskers and tail tickle me sicker,  
needle claws accent its dance-and-dart ballet  
up my vertebrae. My own hidebound act  
vacillates between stupor and tightrope walking  
while juggling my heart, liver and spleen.

Still, I know what's taking place:  
The weasel, live coal eyes level with mine,  
sniffs toward my brain. It listens  
for certain major chords to reverberate  
through dividing cells as it waits for a chance  
to light the ultimate fire.

--Glenna Holloway

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THE LEGACY OF ZELDEKOT

My work is ancient, older than the tools  
For which your archaeologists have named  
An age. As old as hunger, dirt and fools.  
Dismiss the base profession that has claimed  
The rank. There was no trade in flesh back then.  
With life at constant risk, the ways of men  
Were bent upon survival. Mine was not  
A long existence. Still, it was my lot  
To master certain types of clay and slime  
And from this simple medium I got  
The wheel-- an exclamation point in time.

Return with me to tall ferns, shallow pools,  
A bank of naked people, none ashamed.  
Some sit in groups, some shout, a baby drools.  
I'm Zeldekot, the one whose foot is maimed.  
The leaders say we must move higher when  
We've stripped the fruits and tubers from this fen.  
I mold a sticky mudball as I squat;  
To hide my fear I sculpt another pot--  
A poor container formed from grit and grime--  
Impermanent, unlike that last longshot,  
The wheel-- an exclamation point in time.

The potter bakes his wares in sun, work cools  
By night. Despite my pains I never blamed  
The gods for failures, or the quagmire ghouls  
My mother cursed with runes when I was lamed.  
No fire-bolts had as yet besieged our glen.  
Our foods were eaten raw inside our den.  
Then sudden lightning smote a tree! The spot  
Continued smoldering, turned black. And smoking hot,  
I find my hard-fired bowls-- a gift sublime,  
A revelation-- leading me to plot  
The wheel-- an exclamation point in time.

(cont.)

You modern students, step outside your schools:  
Imagine me, a boy who never aimed  
At history or knew of nature's rules.  
By saving glowing charcoal, fire is tamed  
And progress stumbles far beyond my ken.  
So now we cook and eat the water-hen.  
And now we store food longer, postpone rot.  
Rerieved from travel, unaware a root  
Is growing deeper, coming to its prime,  
I form two circles on a stick. I've wrought  
The wheel! An exclamation point in time.

I miss the point at first, make spools  
For winding strands of palm, and beads. Inflamed  
Imagination fashions clay toadstools,  
Bird effigies. At first, the children gamed,  
But now they want my secrets. I teach ten.  
One soon makes markings with a feather pen  
To tell how clay is mixed with bergamot.  
They learn to watch the fires and master what  
Must quickly be passed on. I add some lime  
To our experiments--invention's sparks to whet  
The wheel-- an exclamation point in time.

The cutters, carvers will refine this jot,  
This thing that rolls. But say of me, one dot  
On mankind's scroll, a boy who couldn't climb:  
This is the legacy of Zeldekot--  
The wheel-- an exclamation point in time.

--Glenna Holloway

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INSIDE PASSAGE, GLACIER BAY

I left the midnight sound of the ship's orchestra,  
tightly closed couples, funereal scent of carnations.

Down here the engine massages my soles, strums  
my belly, a discordant guitar. The screw munches  
loose ice, spitting fragments against the hull  
like pieces of my life, a hollow random tattoo.

Old images line my crevices. Other guests are primed  
with promises of scenic splendor with gourmet breakfast.  
Now the first corridor is full of trailing sentences,  
serial goodnights. I wait for the last door to close.

The empty elevator delivers me to the top deck,  
the penultimate chill. The sea  
is Irish whiskey smooth on the rocks. The air  
cleans my lungs like silk pulled through a gun barrel.

Across the bowscape, the moon trails a ramp wide enough  
to climb if I wanted to be higher. At land's end,  
an old worn glacier kneels to lap reflections.  
The tall young one catches every dangling shine, volleys

the bright bias from peak to pylon to friezes of poems  
in blue calligraphy. Hoarded indigo scalded with silver  
can no longer resist duress of trapped fire. The facade  
cracks and falls. Slow geysers muffle the shock wave.

Liquid silver heals over the wreckage  
wallowing to the surface, blue-fluxed, light-brazed.  
The glacier's forehead exposes another vein of blue,  
another poem. The ship barely dips, moves on in afterquiet

while bakers far below make bread. I feel kneaded  
on their boards. Abruptly I'm set aside to rise. I ease  
back, careful not to slip. Older by decades, I experiment  
with breath, pick up my coat, hunker in its warmth.

A great bald eagle crosses the moon-flood, sounding  
like wet sheets on a windy clothesline, circling  
to look again at what is passing under his jurisdiction.  
Like him, I rise, silvered and possible.

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BIOGRAPHER FOR THE BELDAM

Like sanctified relics  
of old despots who sold  
their bottled bathwater and tears  
to their subjects, and enshrined  
their shed hairs in gold casks,

her words are preserved  
in their own resinous venom.  
Some strange chemistry keeps them  
whole as delivered  
while the mouth that mints them  
shrivels like a drawstring purse.

His sleep is no longer troubled.  
Knowing there are collectors  
of such bibelots, he waits  
quietly, letting the fossil wasp  
enhance the price of amber.

--Glenna Holloway

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### EPISTEMOLOGY

After you fulfilled all I could wish,  
making me think humans were never evicted  
from Eden, I told you I believe this moment,  
this now, is the essence of epistemology.

Not expecting philosophy in my arms,  
you make an uncertain sound, and I reply  
in your ear: This is the purest kind of knowledge,  
because of how we receive it, where it comes from.

Holding you after hunger is quiet reveals more  
than things spoken. Blood cadence at rest tells  
what no written language can. Words are frayed  
and flawed, but I feel your feelings as they form.

You nod and tell me you knew we were conversing  
before I broke the silence. Did you also hear me  
say what tongues have trivialized, what voices  
have betrayed, what dictionaries can't define?

You whisper yes and press closer. Love's lore  
originates here, coming from where we live,  
this tranquil time and place  
where flesh and being concentrate truth.

Where we know what needs knowing. We know.

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MR. FOXE UNFOLDS HIS THEORY  
(After "Touched with Fire" --Ray Bradbury)

Insurance men do have a certain flaw;  
they tend to analyze the odds and draw  
conclusions, then accept them as the law.  
Thus Foxe laid out his points for Mr. Shaw.

Foxe did a lot of reading; he meant well.  
He hoped to save the woman from her hell.  
He quoted experts; Shaw, an easy sell,  
would nod and frown and listen to him tell

how statisticians pinpoint certain keys--  
like finding bloody crimes occur in threes,  
while temperature of ninety-two degrees  
can trigger murderers and murderees:

Sometimes the victim plays an active role,  
transmitting signals deep within his soul,  
a death-wish blazing in an aureole  
unseen by passing people as a whole.

Yet visible to those the devil plants  
with strange antennae tuned to rarest chance,  
susceptible to special circumstance  
igniting flames that make his minions dance.

Retired, the two old underwriters walked  
together. Foxe was sweating as they stalked  
his thesis to infinity and talked  
about prevention. Suddenly Shaw balked:

"You really mean to speak to her, that witch,  
that ten-mouthed termagant, the sort of which  
I've never seen?" "She's like a flaming itch,"  
said Foxe, "If we can help--we've found our niche!"

"You think she has a secret hope to die  
by someone else's hand, and that is why  
she acts so vile? You think we can apply  
persuasion, get her to a shrink?" A sigh

pursued Shaw's words: "I hope she throws us out.  
It's much too hot to listen to her shout."  
Foxe said, "I'll take the lead, we'll go about  
it calmly. It's our duty, there's no doubt."

But as with many mortal plans, the best  
can run afoul against some hidden beast.  
The beldam's rage lit fires in Foxe's breast.  
His cane above her head, he failed the test.

--Glenn Holloway

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NEMEROV'S BEEKEEPER SPEAKS OF LOVE

Each passing year the job's collective stings  
Make changes in the blood, may even cure  
Arthritis. Still, the tyranny of spring's  
Resurgent hunger stays. The hive's deep core  
Saves sugared warmth against endemic freeze,  
Enough to prime a long-indifferent pulse.  
In fields inside my swarming dark, the bees  
Invest me with their will, and it compels  
My life, my declaration: You are mine;  
The venom humming in my veins-- salvation.  
Your angry barbs' deposits turn benign  
Beneath this worker's stores of resignation.  
And though my vow incurs a painful price,  
Immunity is nature's own device.

--Glenna Holloway

7/15 Regulars; Blue Blossoms  
Provisions; Indulge Loop;  
Dwelling Std. Time; Mod fil  
Home to Morning; Detach/Zoom;  
Statistical Bias; Potato  
Secrets; OpenWRT; On Way  
Home; Dispossessed; Didn't  
Mean it When I wrote; M/D  
Bouquets; Pintevs & Paintings;  
Fever Out; Nine of Ticks; Zeldocat  
Chart Royal; Inside Passage

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AUGUSTEMBER

Last night was murky; wild moonflowers  
opened wider to make their own light.  
Tonight, fish silvering to the surface,  
ravel stars in the cold black river.  
I try to hold on to summwer,  
fingertips coppery, slippery  
like the powder from a monarch's wings.  
A loon on the lake hails the passing  
with two chilled notes spilled in space.  
All the way home  
their treble plays my spine, imprinting  
blue ice peaks on my warm graph.

--Glenna Holloway

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DEEP SWAMP

Two wading egrets  
in long courting plumage drink  
their last reflections

Sun drops suddenly  
After is not for humans  
A night heron shrieks

Wind stirs brown water  
around cottonmouth coils  
and bald cypress knees

Mist and moon mingle  
Wings and pawpads ply shadows  
Rats and rabbits hide

Now is the hunter's  
Only hunger rules the dark  
Law is ancient here

--Glenna Holloway

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ARENA

It's THEM versus US; US versus THEM. Easy.  
An uncomplicated formula for direct action.

THEM: the ones who grow the stuff,  
poppies and hemp and coca leaves  
in secluded fields, hillsides, yards, boxes.  
Simple pleasant plants, less work  
than corn or wheat and far better returns.

THEM: the ones who refine it  
to paste and powder in dirty secret labs,  
dirty containers, dirtier hands.

THEM: the ones who move it from the South,  
the East, on donkey backs, on bicycles,  
in laundry, old tires, toys, body hollows,  
in late model cars, planes, attache cases  
across our wild edges, our gracious hems.

THEM: the unbiased ones who peddle to all,  
unmindful of race or religion, tolerant  
of poor man, pregnant woman, or child,  
their ranks firmly rooted in regardless.

US: the ones who cultivate small patches  
of comfort protected by modicums of insulation  
surrounded with refinement of floral borders,  
morning papers scanned with obligatory sighs,  
and annual trips to get away from the clamor.

US: unranked and disarrayed, daily depleted  
with losses, some to their side to become THEM.  
US: less well-defined, less surely slotted,  
most of US relegated to conflicting conflicts  
on cramped battlefields of uncommitted grays.

US: telling our children "users are losers,"  
telling each other we're winning.  
The great majority US, still dodging the draft,  
looking for our weapons, cleaning off rust,  
wounding ourselves in the foot,  
still not sure where the front is  
or what the enemy looks like.

GLENNA HOLLOWAY  
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THE NAMINGS

Long starless nights when she couldn't sleep or violent dreams of fiery swords wakened her, the thought persisted. Why? Sweaty noons when sun broiled skin and endless wandering blistered feet, arms scraped on thorns, legs itching with insect bites, she wondered why. Why hadn't the serpent approached Adam?

The proposition, first phrased as a question, psychologically packaged, was more than a mere exercise in temptation. The serpent needed knowledge. Each time it tried to sample the coveted tree's prize for itself, it was blown to the ground by a fierce wind.

Already well-versed in evil, it needed facts about good. One can't conquer what one can't comprehend: a basic principle. It watched the human pair for days, knew when they ate and slept, knew when she left his hand to stroll with the canine he named "wolf," or fill the flowered air with her lyrical laughter at the bouncing creature he named "rabbit."

The serpent was amused when Adam named it "dragon." It was convinced that Adam, made of common clay, could be easily mastered. What it didn't know was how soon the taster would die as God declared. If one bite killed the man quickly, his mate he called "woman" would be left. Alive, untainted, Eden hers alone.

It was she the serpent feared most, the unpredictable, the more complicated half of a superior life form. God spent extra time making her, used bone, not dust, added nuances He hadn't thought of with Adam. If "woman" fell after one taboo taste, the serpent would be rid of her, sure that Adam could be overcome at leisure. But if, as suspected, their punishment were protracted, the female would then have time to offer the fruit to her mate, and both would be doomed.

The perfect solution. How interesting to learn how long God would let them stand. How fascinating to observe that thing God designed called "death."

Thus the leading question: "So the Lord said you couldn't eat from any of the garden's trees?" And her reply followed by the reassurance: "Oh no, you won't die. That isn't what He meant. God just wasn't sure you were ready to know as much as He. See how benignly perfect, how sweetly inviting is the fruit of this centerpiece tree? Made to enjoy!"

Everything visible was beautiful. The tempter was beautiful, its lithe symmetrical body was warm with evil wisdom hidden under gold and silver plates, opal wings, ruby eyes and iridescent patterns on its hide glowing with all the colors human eyes could see.

(cont.)

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And unlike the other fauna, it had a dulcet voice.  
Almost as melodic as God's.

Innocence without suspicion, inexperience  
without caution, no stores of lore to draw on,  
no hormones of fear. The woman took what was proffered.

The serpent was still smiling as Adam bit.  
The humans frowned at each other, disconcerted.  
They ran to gather leaves to wear.

Afterward, she pondered God's last visit.  
The shock, the shame, the expulsion. Now she dropped  
to the forest floor to rest. Adam picked leeches  
off their ankles and scratched the rash on his back.  
He sloshed aside the slime at the edge of a pool,  
cupped his hands around a drink just as she screamed  
at a long legless threat crawling toward her  
on the ground. She struck the hideous gaping head  
with a stone and Adam beat it dead with a branch.  
It was like nothing he had named back in the garden.  
They wondered if there were others. They hurried away.

At last, the woman asked her mate  
the most pressing "why" of all, "Why did you taste  
the fruit? You didn't seem to find it so appealing.  
You could have refused. You could have spared yourself."

"No. I couldn't. God warned us not to eat it.  
I couldn't let you suffer the consequences alone. Nor,  
once having you, my help meet, could I bear to be alone."

Adam began making tools, tilling soil. The woman  
ground seeds between rocks, hauled water, gutted fish.  
Often they wished for fellow humans to share the toil.  
They thought God had spoken of more of their kind coming  
forth, but His voice was thunder, His eyes lightning,  
and they could not understand all His words that awful day.

She ached between her hips again, and once again blood  
ran down her thighs, yet she had no discernable wound.  
She swabbed with moss, hoping her predicament  
would pass more quickly than the first time--  
back in that dark vault of rock where they shivered,  
where they ate some other unnamed creature--  
like a combination "bird" and "rat." Back where everything  
trembled, rumbled, and part of the cave collapsed.

Within the time of Earth's first journey around the sun,  
they sheltered under dried vegetation hoisted on sticks,  
wore animal skins, ate grasses, and her belly enlarged.  
Memories of God's face and their first glorious home faded  
and they could not recall some of the creatures' names.

Then on a new day Adam named his wife "Eve" for she,  
in her suffering, bore a son, and became the mother of all.  
And the world would forever remember.

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A WOMAN NAMED KATHERINE

Her neighbors sit murmuring, leaning together:  
"Katy was so sweet," "so caring," "so--"  
clucking, repeating, letting their voices catch.  
All around the ritual room of shaking heads,  
sometime-friends recite her in psalter tones.  
Their sibilance swarms over her bier like bees;  
their stingers find my most hidden places.

At least no mawkish mass will fill a space  
like this once my lips are cosmetically closed.  
They could never muster enough charity  
to honey their tongues with me. What right  
have they to my name in their warm mouths!  
What right to hers!

Dear Katherine--  
maybe even you weren't always wonderful.  
Or maybe you ran on low amperage,  
never knowing how it is  
to operate on your own hot crossed-circuits,  
splicing with scorched fingers  
your own frayed smoking wires. Maybe you  
never smelled the char, heard the crackle.

Or maybe you did it all and knew it well  
under insulation of infinite grace.

I bite down on my silence, taste it.  
Dear Katherine, I remember: Silence,  
you once said, is where learning begins.

In silence to come, to keep,  
you will keep teaching me this.  
In my still learning, forbearing,  
you will be my shield.  
And in silence, I will be your monument.

--Glenna Holloway

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around its fierce newly-formed star,  
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### COMING HOME TO MORNING

I saddled the Appaloosa first thing.  
Three years since I sat a horse, three years  
of alien winds, bias, staccato winds  
bullying my unsure steps.

Southwest winds are indigo and green, curved  
and fringed like the Appaloosa's neck.  
Across plains, hills, valleys  
they roll, humming a major key opus.

A riding wind is an opal and oboe wind,  
long legato passages streaming my face,  
cooling patches of freckles popping out  
on my arms like grace notes.

Gold glare shuts down my eyes, the horse  
glorious under me, her dull thunder hypnotic,  
her mane billowing, brushing my knuckles  
like raveled raw silk. We plunge into tunnels,

branch-lapped, a future of lemon light. We emerge  
dusty with pollen scent, bits of treble clinging  
to our eyelashes. The spotted mare, pure rhythm  
and music, resolves almost-forgotten chords.

Full gallop, we circle a clearing of clover,  
once for every year I've missed.  
I'll hurt on hell's pitchforks tomorrow  
but arpeggios of laughter take me around again,

windsong whispering the pain will be sweet.

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I DIDN'T MEAN IT WHEN I WROTE:

"It's bothersome enough  
To burden paper with this stuff.  
No sinner is set free  
By packaged words tied up in poetry  
That precious few will see.  
So why pursue mechanical designs  
In convoluted sequences and form  
Like disconcerting kudzu vines  
That smother readers, render themes infirm?"  
My cheek began to sting as if a blow  
Had struck, a smart rebuke from Erato.

Alone, I glanced around;  
No explanation could be found.  
My face was burning red--  
"Appropriate for twice a fool," I said,  
"Whose verses rule his head.  
Attempting to reach people who won't hear  
Expands the role of universal twit."  
My self-excoriating jeer  
Was interrupted by another hit,  
A new reproach, no slap, more of a jolt:  
The muse released a forking lightning bolt.

Madame, you've made your point.  
I wish you'd simply just annoint  
Your poor affiliates  
With fragrant potpourri that stimulates  
But never aggravates  
These tender spots in need of soothing oils.  
Come ease this poet's growing pains and turn  
Prosaic mantras into foils  
For profound love all people can discern.  
Erotic or agape, I'd express  
The finest feelings humans can possess.

Ah, Erato, I'm not  
Satirical, I've truly got  
A worthy pitch to play  
Upon mankind's appendages of clay.  
Don't let didactics cloy  
And fall among the weeds and feral oats  
Of loiterers on shores of shifty sands.  
Let rhymes enhance my pithy quotes  
And rhythms reason with their wayward hands.  
Regale my pen but spare them my mistakes,  
And please make sure the higher meaning sticks.

Form: John Donne's "The Triple Foole"