

David Welch

It Is Such a Good Thing
To Be In Love with You



It Is Such a Good
Thing to Be
In Love with You

David Welch

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§

after Berrigan

In the Book of his music the corners have straightened
and the day is bright gray turning green,
slow kisses on the eyelids of the sea

I strain to gather my absurdities

*

My babies parade waving their innocent flags

as the bulbs burn phosphorescent, white,
opulent, sinister, and cold,

bouncing a red rubber ball in the veins

*

I too am reading the technical journals, but
first may we read about all those radio waves
racing down the blue lugubrious rainways

*

The indexed Webster Unabridged Dictionary—
the romance of it all was overwhelming

Put away your hair Books shall speak to us

of Marilyn Monroe, her white teeth white—

she is warm Into the vast closed air of the slow

cherrywood romances of rainy cobblestones

my babies parade waving their innocent flags

*

aching in rhythm to that pounding morning rain

We may read about all those radio waves

& who dumbly begs a key & who cannot pay his way
on the 15th day of November in the year of the motorcar

*

Elvis Peering-Eye danced with Carol Clifford, high,

seven thousand feet over one green schoolboy summer

Andy Butt was drunk in the Parthenon

*

Do you want me to take off my dress?

*

In a rare, unconscious moment,
it is such a good thing to be in love with you

And then one morning to waken perfect-faced
in the square, on the farm, in my white block of hair

The most elegant present I could get
and I find my hand grows stale at the throttle

*

You can make this swooped transition on your lips
to be printed in simple type on old brown paper

*

It is night You are asleep And beautiful tears

sleep half sleep half silence and with reasons

*

Daughters prefer to lay 'em on a log and tear their hair

wan as pale thighs making apple belly strides

*

Not me I like to beat people up

*

My hands make love to my body when my arms are around you
The most elegant present I could get!

*

Each tree stands alone in stillness

The withered leaves fly higher than dolls can see
I strain to gather my absurdities into a symbol

*

The cherrywood romances of rainy cobblestones

The dirt-covered ground, tied together
only with fifteen pieces

of glass on the roof of my tree

*

Whatever is going to happen is already happening

is not genuine it shines forth from their faces
will not kneel for everything comes to it

Like Word Origins and cribbage boards or dreams

*

White boats green planks black dust Atremble

the withered leaves fly higher than dolls can see

That the angels have supereminent wisdom is shown
and takes the eye away from the gray words

An Organ-Grinder's monkey does his dance
defying natural law, saying, "Go Fuck Yourselves,"

*

and I fall on my knees then, womanly

*

Rivers of annoyance undermine the arrangements

*

I am closing my window Tears silence the wind

and the rust on the bolt in my door
which owe presence to our sleeping hands

*

These sonnets are an homage to myself

*

The logic of grammar is not genuine it shines forth

*

The academy of the future is opening its doors

*

How strange to be gone in a minute!

White lakes tremble down to green goings on

Whatever is going to happen is already happening

*

I walk out in the bleak village and look for you

§

Belief in story is a belief
in travel or trouble—
a newborn becoming
unmoved by his conscience,
a vocabulary collecting

reason by slow degrees.
Suppose it's not fear
but how we spend our lives
which should be a matter
for contrast. Say Christopher

Columbus went out constantly
at five o'clock and seized geraniums
from the windows. Say Mallarmé

resolved solitude
with a superficial room
in which birds filled empty moments

with sneezes. First
there would be strange joy
and then the calculations
of shortcomings,
which we call a history.

The mind is interested with permission.

The brain is a room
in which the mind is
an unstable, human notion:

“an oval table opposite the sofa,”

a little yellow color on the walls.

So story thinks, and story

sleeps, and the author who designs our brains
by their more general natures
does not align strangeness with joy.

Analysis develops

vocabulary,
victorious with fancy
light, and thus dream—

a sort of superficial sleep.

So a dream—

*from beginning
to end, Columbus
remains asleep*

*as a spider appears
to lift him
across Paris...*

We plot our outlines.

A painter proposing
he decline to display

seasons; ghosts

on the back of
a woman's eye;

your head glued

back like a charm
to the beautiful.

When Christopher
Columbus asked the Lord
for three wishes
he began simply
tracing in pencil the axis
of his body. The Lord said,

I wished my death
a parenthesis
to the shapes
of trees and automobiles,
though I have instead
left two realities:

*either the world goes back into a sack
or the day flows like a song in the brook.*

The Lord said,
you must believe in a room
of marvelous couches.

The bodies of birds
are ghosts,

the Lord
said, marvelous
above water—

and so the purest
way the mind
leaves
the earth.

Saying,

“Existence is
a Suitor’s Ball”

is fine if
you say it

across some
distance,

like a radio—

so the woods
Columbus dreamt
became lost
like several lives
imagined
at once; or,

a tiny number
of birds judge
an evening
in its decay—

no matter what happens,
the result is nothing
and is thus
distinguished
from storytellers
or dreams.

Storytellers or dreams—

which is a matter of gathering?

Christopher Columbus said to the Lord,

Even dark,
the world remains
possible.

Light may begin
at the first touch
of summer,

or else widespread
and daily
across the sea,

and then suddenly
and closely
we see “the world is not

merely a question of distance.”

Or,
the Lord said,

a nude body
parading

beneath the shade
of trees like

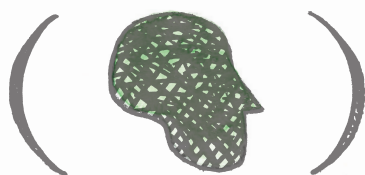
an eclipse—
“how travelers endure.”



David Welch is the recipient of the 2014 Lucille Medwick Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America and teaches in the English Department of DePaul University. He serves as Poetry Editor of ACM, and is an enthusiastic volunteer at 826CHI, and his poems have appeared in AGNI, Boston Review, and Pleiades, among others.

David Webb

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