



**TWENTY POEMS**

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A *Coyote's Journal* publication  
<http://www.coyotesjournal.com/>

## BASIC INSTRUCTIONS

Live  
our job is to be lively

Die  
no need to be a hundred

## AUBADE

...dog barks, jay screeches,  
rooster crows, crow squawks,  
cat yowls, cow moos,  
train rumbles, plane roars,  
phone rings, horn honks,  
door slams, neighbor shouts...

## NOCTURNE

...dog barks, mouse skitters,  
house creaks, frog croaks,  
cat yowls, dove coos,  
cricket chirps, owl hoots,  
clock ticks, fridge hums,  
faucet drips, spouse snores...

## ODE

O little town, you are all America to me.  
Two gas stations, one tavern, sunset the big event.  
I'm glad the only traffic light always stops me.

THE YELLOW WHEELBARROW

I dump out the rain  
from a yellow wheelbarrow  
and find a glaze of sunlight.

## OLD STORY

Old car, old man, old hat.  
Old house, old woman, old dress.  
Old rug, old dog, old shoe.

### THREE OREGON PROVERBS

Bees in the garbage,  
honey in the hive.

Blacker the rain cloud,  
whiter the dogwood.

One foot in the air,  
the other in mud.

HOMAGE TO NIEDECKER

Like Basho  
Lorine  
    with little  
    makes a  
splash

\*

Whatever's  
up, stops---  
    while we  
    watch  
snow fall

## TWO VARIATIONS

Frost  
no thicker than that  
transforms the whole farm

Colt  
no older than that  
trots on shaky legs

MOTHER

Mother says Oh,  
I've seen the dogwood  
flower another year.

## MY CAT

My cat stretched out in a patch of sunlight.  
Cats know what life is all about: nothing.  
Instruct me in your doctrine, O Wise One.

## MASTURBATION

Poor spermatozoa  
swimming like crazy  
and nowhere to go.

CITY PARK (HOMAGE TO REZNIKOFF)

Traffic drone versus the drone of bees.

WHILE YOU'RE AWAY

An itch on my back

I can't

quite

reach.

## TWO RIVERS

Santiam Gorge  
roars with white water  
making thinking inaudible.

Metolius River  
murmurs an endless story  
putting us to sleep.

## TAKING A SHOWER

A wild, secretive animal,  
my naked body  
disappears  
in the steamed mirror!

## OLD FRIEND

Going to bed earlier,  
I don't see as much of the moon.  
But I think of you, old friend.

Going for the morning paper,  
there you are---a chance meeting  
the best meeting between friends.

THE WOOD ROSE

I forget months of winter:  
the wood rose flowers  
between gray fence posts.

## FINDING A HAWK

Death  
so expected  
such a surprise

Life  
that soared  
down from the sky

WEE HOURS

Owl calls  
“Who who  
who’s listening?”

Poet scrawls  
“Who who  
who’s listening?”