



The Greatest Virtue
 What does it profit a man
 To gain the whole world
 And suffer the loss
 Of inner integrity?

Leveling Measures

Carpenter -- no, nor carpenter like
 I'm bending back straight
 a bent nail I'll bend again

There's no point imagining
 the shelf built
 not to sag
 or wag at both ends
 or the cupboard doored to shut after itself
 or bed slats cut to rest
 great coiling double springs
 quiet as a grave

will not tear loose and cry out loud
 "Maker, Maker, we are made
 to spill over
 anything that isn't wholly true"
 before settling for good
 all my insides out
 upsides down

-Robert Gibbs



Choose Another

Death is an iron lung
 Forcing a dead body to breathe awhile longer.
 That dreaded infants' disease
 Has smashed down a teacher of infants.
 How many engineers, poets, nurses, teachers
 Have you condemned with this senseless carnage?
 What of the murderer, swindler, rapist, hypocrite?
 Rob them of their breath!
 O! Damn you Death!
 For your arbitrary choice of victims.

Time passes; wounds heal
 Yet come you to plague me again, black angel?
 No! Not this one
 Whom I have seen run gaily through the fields,
 Clasp fondly children to her womb
 From whence none may now issue forth.
 Whose brilliant eyes see only gloom
 Nerves so destroyed that
 They sense not the silkiness of silk.
 Must you give warning?

Cannot you steal in the dark of night?
 Must you torment victim and friend alike?

--Ludlow

The Modern Way to Pray

Our economy

Which art in shape

Blessed by thy name-brands.

May thy thriving prosper.

May thy boost be felt

By producers and consumers.

Give us each month

Our fatted cheque

And extend to us our credit

As we do likewise to others.

And lead us not into inflation

But deliver us from bankruptcy

Amen.

-Leo Ferrari

The River

A moving strand -- the shining river --
 Flowing light, gilt by the sun.
 Radiant strand and silver sliver;
 Its ripples blindly seaward sun.

Blown by gales, past stately trees,
 By cliffs so high on either side --
 Fail not to answer to the breeze!
 For blessings with the meek abide.

And when the river meets the ocean,
 The river mingles, gone from view.
 And yet, as though by magic potion,
 It is not gone, that strand of blue.

For it's a special entity --
 Unique, no matter how much tossed,
 And it lives on, in boundless sea,
 A speck that cannot e'er be lost.



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