

DONALD BERGER

When We Talk About Love

Writing is too easy, but great red
And blue birds fly, tree to tree, like they did in the 1700's.
There are ninety something more days. I support everything
But then time swings in with even more. Even though a lot seems hard.
There are still places, scenes, events, and the sun, an equal. It's early
Not late, green, not gray, a lot of examples of something to see like
Showy colored flowers petals with long hollow spurs,
From feminine of Latin, dovelike.
Another example (of something) would be:
The large gap between two of Saturn's rings.
Wednesday, the sound of that. Music
Is sound's time, song interspersed with life, a row of tuned steel teeth
Are plucked by pins in a revolving cylinder to make a melody, a voice curves
Across a giant room and lands, where love swivels, as if flavoring light.

The Rose of Maine

If love weren't so
Enormous I would live with its two hands
On me forever lifted.

Where else could silence bed
With adoration
Like a color spreading down a coast?

It's true what life does
Across a desk, what next week is,
How days kiss, and people get wet.

I'm organizing
Seed head-on. Skin
And then life

Builds from its chowder
Of questions on the street:
Whose blue

Billiard ball is this
So far from its table?
Whose can,
Emptied?

Study of “The Look of Love”

At the start of “The Look of Love” sung by Dusty Springfield
 The drums, the rhythm section are ready for her
 Some kind of percussion stick and maybe cymbal, piano
 But she opens it all by herself with the first two words “The Look...”
 You can tell the band had to be ready when the hand dropped
 And Dusty drove in, at slow speed
 It’s those first two words, unaccompanied, the rest of the band falls into
 And she sounds like she’s taken a breath, a deep one, just before she takes off
 And the microphone’s still empty but not for long
 There’s guitar in there too almost instantly
 They let her sing, wrapping her voice around Castle Rock, those first two words “The Look”
 at the k the rest pops in--it’s one on those sticks or gourds with ribs on them

The tone’s committal, sad for the ear but declarative, stating a wish, no, a conviction
 A slight sheet of cotton muting in her throat at first

It’s the only Dusty Springfield I could ever let in
 In the dentist’s chair once, my mouth packed with cotton and clamps,
 And Doctor Weinstein’s face an inch from mine, and “Windmills of Your Mind”
 Sung by Dusty Springfield, pathetically (because of the limitation of the song) floating
 Through the room, Doctor Weinstein said, his mouth at my ear, “I really like the way Dusty
 does this song...”

The sax in “The Look of Love” throws a large blanket also
 Through Dusty, martini-like, strangely,
 When you buy or borrow it or catch it twice a year on the road.
 So prepare for those first two notes come from the cave,
 Or the Kennedys, or the sharpest
 Cocktail points, or beauty’s tent, beauty.com

Lucky

As you remember the white daffodils show up on the first New Years Day
in the yellow bowl of rich colors from some dynasty.

I love I have to sit down this second, you on account of the heart,

blood that feels its days, mind that knows the room, the ink that purposefully dries.

I ask you, and the sound of a bird points out. The head rests on the left hand

With the elbow supporting what is love, a motor with more blue in the sky,

or the head weighs twelve pounds the big blue plastic bottle resting
under trees whose names I don't even know how easy to say.

Not mentioning sun to depend still part of what the three-day feasting,

I thought when you show, a soft ring of the phone, or the longest lens,

one position of caring. For whatever steps that man is taking, then a woman pops out
for a walk in it, trying to feel and use the dictionary maybe that I'll fetch,

the sun just fell on the road, connected still with certain shadows.

Two weeks from eighty per cent the bird a black kite swept through behind then out
of the trees today flowers not hurried worried, what instant grin from him

the older man at seeing someone sitting at a table,

something of small purpose then to find I think it *is* the father suddenly,

the small boy's mother holding him, they all get into a car I guess.

You come through the door with everything the screech of a bird increased amount of sun.

Then it's time to go and watch the dragon dance again. A hot cup hits the glass,

or what the jet is doing to the sky, the ocean so unselfish is it god

that holds the noises to your ear, twelfth century's morning's rush High German *Luba*,

Latin *libere* to free to please more people, the room's own words, long has its last,

another jet straight over us, seeming pregnant. How slowly I walk this pen its point still

presses letters into the paper no sign of any ink, like using soap, or a glass.

To love everything maybe not so equally, steps forbidden, there's a chain across them.

I love I have to sit down this second, writing is love to snap open the can,

squeal from this bus's brakes, beautiful color coat just now I love you with.

The push of the air from people moving past, it's going to be real as soon,

and never learn, but love the looking out, our pasts, like times in May,

heart thrown for you, sophisticated as a melon. What is the word for what they say,

the resting places, branches really really green. I love it's almost time, and what they did

and who they saw. I love you know what to do, inside the cloud, perception's always

polarized, we're never blind. Thank separating things from things,
no pressure change over this much measurement. Life can decide how far away
or close, the look of knowing up or down, wings if you like,

teachers showed as help in balancing. I love the plane touches down
and we don't see any land, and still talk again. If heaven feels like anything
with each new swing of the axe, the tree's whole again.

Somewhere that Takes Visa

Since I gave up hope
 I feel much better.
 Are men
 good? Yes.
 What do I know?
 What is it with the world?
 How quick the grass
 has to grow, I'm thinking now,
 having time pressed that "Blind
 Dave" Keneally's double-
 jointed peanut stand.
 They knit history
 into every hat.
 I can see it with the Plains Indians,
 giving away
 instead of what you have.
 I'm a doctor.
 Then I'm a lawyer,
 then I'm a doctor again.
 As time thinks
 it passes:
Don't worry
I won't throw beer.
 Someone pulls you
 by the shoulders
 away from the page,
 a man who insisted
 on phoning while
 using the urinal,
 the wedding guest whose
 phone went off between
 the words "I" and "do".
 Recent moments end
 shortly before or
 after they start,
 the people, the towers,
 their language
 is just full of love.

I'm Not Here

Yes I was almost in _____.
 I saw the ring the king wears.
 No one as I love you,
 You were right,
 Corner of Roses,
 Older than me
 With the good shoes,
 Blue eyes the same,
 Healthier in the sun.

Same day, same weeks,
 Different months,
 Huge leaves
 Were forming sentences.
 Found their way faster
 To their feelings,
 A poem that ends
 Once we forget it.

What is *foam* called?
 What does *odd* mean?
 How do you say
With my artwork
I intend to show...
 The jet's voice, a calm room
 Viewing the yard,
 Long, and then short,
 and then long again.

Water in the glass.
 no memory of thunder,
 If the season ended today,
 Social poems.
 If we were driving
 In France we would say O
 France is so beautiful,
 Near where your mother
 Still carried you,
 With one more look
 At where they killed
 The snake.

The valley

Does something I'm looking
For the word.
Born an old woman,
That's how the first person
Was formed.
A hat made from
The skin of a _____
That made its wearer invisible.

I'm bad
And you're not.
Names with the same letters,
I feel how I always
Feel, it doesn't matter whether you
Stopped the train
After I left.
After I went away.

Regular love.
Popeye squeezes the knife—
I mean the can.
He splits it
And the spinach flows out.
Evil dies.
Laziness and love.

Love

You don't see that very often, pillow with LOVE on it.

To like everything or even love
i.e. the word "background" on a t-shirt all in lower case
or DUNK LIFE

Young stay and have their love.
History loves its verse.

Rita's Hand

What about the night
When I was holding Rita's hand
And by mistake kissed my own!

Dear Eastern,

For your colossal song (written) of late
just before you were about to take Newton
by the throat, what of a time this is
wot change's such, where you're forever welcome—
and this a sublime escape, from realest dangers.

My sister and mother in Peabody,
whose orchard where I heard a woman
or man call out to another man,
"I see scarecrows in your future, James!
They still have corn on them."

On the way to Los Angeles three days after
Boston first I saw your book on sale
facing straight out at Thurgood Marshall
Aeroporto that's a true story,
like I'd turned on a belt-high and sent it into the fountains.
Trying to think "Live Laugh Love",
I kept halving distance, like Zeno, between the present and that time
when I'd hug Peter bye.
Weak strong weak strong, my psyche took to LA,
all the huge zones
and alleys of eucalyptus
redwood strange pines on the sweeping campus, democratically
elegant, Spanish in its publicity, gorgeous on its own terms,
and then the "village" of
Westwood, late fifties early sixties southern Cal version
of Main Street bumped up in density just a couple of
notches, brought full toward and into
its beauty and verve by the constant sun. Like a security guard

checking his I-phone, like unfrustrated cheese,
I went forward in a different way and
moved Peter in. At one point, at lunch,
there was ice in the urinal--what's with that?
An angel, unlost, fixed my glasses:
"You're a savior." "Well nobody's ever called me
that before." On the menu was something like organized field greens. A
magnetic levitation line on a cushion of air shorn of its far left,
thinking that the diamonds on one woman's finger spelled something,
that each of them was a letter, time took me.
Then the next day after Santa Monica Pier,

where everything was like beauty's beauty, fate
 was pushing me further around toward what was going to happen,
 and my voice quavered (that's the word I've been using)
 when I was leaving Peter's room
 after the goodbye
 and as I turned the corner into the hallway
 I started in on the sobbing right through into the elevator
 and that--a huge relief kind of intense
 like the hot center of every movie.
 Now I'm back, rebounding, talking with you, tall one, Olympic friend.

Yesterday I went to a show to see Jack and his friends' work
 at the Phillips Collection, where he's an assistant,
 then lunched with Natalie then on to Terence Winch's breakfast
 nook at dusk, all that after taking Cindy to Dulles. It's real here—
 I find myself almost
 praying for sun. Last night late at the sub shop,
 they instructed me on the eclipse,
 which I'd heard nothing of, the Super moon and the harvest moon
 and all that shit happening at once, Eli, and the Pope, Jesus,
 the meakness of his voice through the English
 in the House to Congress shook me,
 changed my own way of talking, speaking.

So here it all is, in front of you.
 O, and a jet almost hit Peter and me in Newark. O, and a
 guy said in a bar, "And one girl asked me so what is your five-year plan,
 she texted me,
 and I said shit girl I don't even know what I'm doing *tomorrow!*"

Your Umbrella

If your umbrella is missing,
I know where it is!