

# Bougainvillea

The simple things.

The simple life.

Can we buy one? Can we give it time?

The yard is sunny, on top of a hill. I'm amazed.

Don't worry. The sun makes heat.

The little flowers that need shade will not thrive here.

The deep pink gash, thrash, stainless beauty of the bougainvillea will survive.

Bloom and rebloom all year. Thorns along the side.

The petals fall into the kelly-green grass, into the clear clean glass-green water  
of the pool onto

the warm cement. Lie down there. And the wind

throws the petals all through the air.

They turn pink-to-brown under the rake.

Maybe you were alive someplace, in the East.

But this is not the East. Don't bring it around here.

# Neighbors in Their Own Bunkers

The man in his bunker lets no one in  
So the NOT TRESPASSING sign is a given  
On the high fence, with the curly barbed wire.  
The gun rack, you guess, is not hidden,

Because you've never been inside to see it  
and you will never, in a million years, go in.  
Those family members who come out from their shrouds on occasion  
look dazed by the sunlight.

Yet the smiling face of the Buddha  
—(the man around the block, not a real prophet)  
hides inside his sheepskins and his reputation  
Even what he says is not what he says

Even what he does is not what he does.  
The face is open and the house is open  
And the collection displayed during the parties for four hundred  
for the hospital and the children's orchestra. "Welcome."

The bunker, the bunker.  
Lets no one in.  
Lets no one see the wet oil stain.  
Lets no one see the addendum.

# How Could We Decorate a Haunted House?

These streets like a clogged cochlea  
Low and deep and the houses follow up a narrow steep

Inside the haunted house the man sits and fills the whole room.  
His sad and defeated drinking perfumes off his belly  
His cigarettes and his ponytail  
His rolls of fat, his bag of nachos  
And the nervous woman in the kitchen  
Greeting us, hello, to walk through this place at 6:45 in the morning  
They want to sell—

Nearly hitting our heads—

The flocked wallpaper from a cocktail hour  
A vista over the valley, though the traffic swirls up too loudly—  
Like a nasty acrid smell  
Wouldn't have been that way when it was built, when it was in fashion  
And no one updated the appliances in all those years;  
Door handles have fallen off, the wood paneling punched like a loud yell.

A guest with a prosthetic left leg swivels in his swivel chair to look at us  
Highball glass in hand  
Down the valley, lights across the land.  
She was  
The date of this available gentleman.  
Now she is dead, the view of the town.  
Nothing left: no furniture, no sweet satin nightgown.