otata 45

(September, 2019)

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from otata's bookshelf

frances angela, ***day out***

Joseph Massey, ***No Omen***

Sheila E. Murphy, ***Plaintext***

Tokonoma

from *Missing Chapters*
About Carmelita Torres and others
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkD6QfeRil8

Gerry Loose

Old invective directive against autumn poems

before leaves fall from the maples make sure your gutters are free of pigeon feathers and summer growth
before the first night frost, split and stack your woodpiles against snow & climate change
before the light fails after solstice lay in a stock of candles in whose light you'll read the old masters
you'll already have salted, pickled and juiced summer's heat
save your seeds in brown paper bags; clean your spade and lean it against the wall
look to your boots, make sure they don't leak; where is your hat?
sweep your path and clear most, but not all, the moss
when you have done these things
write this poem

REMAINING

News came to me today of the death of a friend, the poet David Keeffe, or Manjusvara, since he took refuge in a Buddhist order.

Not the last time I saw him, but my abiding memory is of him sitting on the wee platform I set up ten years ago in the glade at the hut garden. It's not really a glade, but it's the only place in our canopy that the sun shines all of the day. Manjusvara was on a kitchen chair, on the platform reading, as I remember, someone else's long life and love affair with a garden. He sat in his red braces with his hearing aids on (he became increasingly deaf and full of joyful mis-hearings) and a cup of tea close to hand. As I see him now, he is still there, head bent in concentration over the page, taking in the rare long afternoon summer sun in hut silence, quietly, composed and still.

Larach Beag, the hut, is hard to find. I like it that way. Many people have told me they will visit; but few do. Some say they tried to find the hut, but gave up.
I realise now that of the very small handful of visitors who have arrived over the years (it has averaged one every two years), they have all been artists or poets: Takaya Fujii, Alec Finlay, Pam Sandals, Larry Butler, Bryan Evans, Ann Russell, Jan Nimmo.
Some folk are wired to find the unfindable, taking a slow and intentional lifetime to look. Manjusvara, David, was one of these.

That afternoon's warmth remains in the seat of the chair and in the grace of the teacup he carefully washed after use.

Text originally published *here*.

Maria Laura Valente

[Entrai nel mare / I Entered the Sea]

Entrai nel mare
per lavare
i neri pensieri
le macchie unte
di solitudine rappresa
e di mancanza.

Entrai nel mare
per perdere
porzioni fallate
di anima
carni avariate e
legno morto.

Ne uscii
a fatica
incrostata
di tempo e di altrove
impastata
di parole di spuma.

Inoculato
nel buio cavo dei ventricoli
il germe del mare
cova vite altre
nel mio vuoto.

Innescata,
celo al mondo
il prodigio
e attendo.

I entered the sea
to wash away
the black thoughts
the greasy stains
of congealed solitude
and lack.

I entered the sea
to lose
some failed portions
of soul
spoiled meats and
dead wood.

I went out
with difficulty
encrusted
of lost time and elsewhere
kneaded
of words of foam.

inoculated
in the dark hollow of the ventricles
the germ of the sea
hatching other lives
in my emptiness.

triggered,
hide it in the world
the prodigy
and I wait.

Mark Young

LINES WRITTEN WHILE WAITING FOR THE OTHER SHOE TO DROP

in Tennessee
intensity

incendiary
unsanitary

THE TENTH WORD

The theater is a place of queuing dictators, whose claque stands in a broken bamboo balcony, surrounded by barbed wire & the O of a singing mouth. Mimicking some radical equation, a bus leaves the nearby corner carrying a splinter group. Shiva lingering. Bleached membranes, inverted summer machinery. Long supple typewriters run wild under the dome.

Sketch

He entered a
number of nearby
homes, & surprised
with his ability to
give piano lessons.

Great landscapes of history

4/192 Charters Towers Rd

next door to The Cheesecake
Shop

same complex as
Radio Rentals
a pizza shop

Athenian Plaza
~~next door~~

Top Brand Cycles

THROUGH A WIRE FENCE

Drugs are the short-term inter-
ventions most often faced at a

zoo. We are at a coal face that
bears minimal resemblance to

the religious feasting of humans.
A well maintained aircraft is vital.

La physique quantique

Have you stopped asking questions about yourself?

Have you stopped questioning the answers?

When you see yourself reflected in a mirror
do you move out of the line of sight? Or do you

accept the presence of the other & then move on?

Nathalie Montressor (1824-1851): from *Les Allusions d'optique*
translated by Umberto Allegrezza

Sequentially

Small things, other
things. Seemingly
unrelated. But. A fine

thread connecting. While
they are held they
are coherent. But. The

world cannot be
carried all at once
or even parts of it. So.

Other threads. Find.
Found. Bind together.
Stand on their own.

a small note for Tom Beckett

what I am most
frightened of are
the shadows within
without shadows

Jeannie Martin

entangled
in the spider's web
spider

blooms
with her back to me
orchid

September sunset
a slower strum
for my dulcimer

John Levy

My Late Father's Comment on a Photo I Sent Him

of myself and a friend, at Olympia, with a stadium behind us where the original Olympic races were run. I sent it to him in 1985, back when I was 34 and he was 62. He wrote back that he recognized me and my clothes. I didn't ask if he was suggesting I update my wardrobe. He loved clothes, as did his father, and had a walk-in closet with hundreds of shirts, some fabulously loud. I'm 68 now, he's no age I suppose, unless I want to consider him the age he was when he died. I don't, I prefer thinking of him as ageless, and, for the moment, in one of those wild shirts he sometimes wore on the weekends. In my mind he's outside, in daylight, in his yard, near his rose bushes and we're both enjoying silence.

Joseph Salvatore Aversano

mirroring
our being
desmids

◦

cooled feet one end of the lake

◦

weighted dragonfly low cloud

◦

driftwood in its flow

In Ionia

i.

cloth
sails

of the
wind

mill in
place

ii.

in the cypresses
the village

cemetery

a little darker
than day

John Phillips

GIVEN

the shape of
the unseen
in the shape of
the seen

PITH

the seed of silence
on the tongue
of light

the sound of a mirror reshapes silence into the river of time

Elmedin Kadric

tu
lip

to
un
zip

the
first
light

NOT THAT

you know

THE

ex
tends

to
mud

hens

TRYING TO

wit,h st,le

Louise Hopewell

whale watching
all the plastic
in the ocean

the green light for
another new coal mine
dead brain coral

serrated leaf
the hottest day
on record

Corrado Aiello

red
orange-yellow-green-blue-indigo-violet
fish

°a wannabe concrete haiku

oriental nights...
in the air the scent
of old tales

summer stillness...
the cucumber
blows up its seeds

°Squirting cucumber (Ecballium elaterium)

dog days
covered in sweat and swear words
stray thoughts

snail trails...

... memories

weavers' song...
garments abandoned
on the river bank

°Weaver birds (belong to Ploceidae)

flu –
the only flavour
lemon

removing a pearl
from its oyster...
lipomatosis

beheading
a king prawn
— quickening

°"Quickening" (double interpretation: the first fetal movements perceived in the uterus or... the mighty release of energy from an Immortal body in Highlander movie – directed by Russell Mulcahy in 1986)

howling winds –
how I wish to see the world
changed

to A. Camilleri

game of mirrors...
a baby seadragon peeps out
through the weedbed

°"game of mirrors" refers to both courtship of seadragons (Phyllopteryx taeniolatus) as well as to a novel by Italian writer Andrea Camilleri (It.: Il gioco degli specchi)

resting with my flute –
two flies
chase each other

unconquerable heaven
... silence
among chrysanthemums

Year of the Pig
I save
all my pearls

zombies...
it's time for the cicadas
to leave their abodes

summer heat –
between one page and another
household chores

afa estiva –
tra una pagina e l'altra
noie domestiche

tidal wave —
I just became an uncle
for the second time

fiery sun:
purslane flowers start
to close

sole ardente:
i fiori di portulaca iniziano
a chiudersi

fading chant ...
the wrath of the elements
to the next level

canto morente ...
la furia degli elementi
a un livello superiore

Giuliana Ravaglia

giorni di maggio:
ai bordi delle vigne ortiche e fiori

may days:
at the edges of the vines, nettles and flowers

pioggia sottile:
il profilo dell'acqua sui fiordalisi

thin rain:
the water's profile on cornflowers

vaga sul fiume la luce della luna:
ti sfioro il cuore

the light of the moon wanders on the river:
I touch your heart

estate:
l'oro dei girasoli fra le sue ciglia

summer:
the gold of sunflowers among his eyelashes

tanabata:
le parole mai dette verso le stelle

tanabata:
the words never said to the stars

ondeggia il vento fra i papaveri rossi:
stammi vicino

the wind sways the red poppies:
stand by me

solstizio d'estate
la pienezza del mio tempo passa e respira

summer solstice:
the fullness of my time passes and breathes

ultima sosta:
un fiore rosso prima di partire

last stop:
a red flower before leaving

vento ribelle che sciabordi l'attesa portami il mare

rebellious wind you lap against this waiting bring me the sea

Carmela Marino

Sindrome di Down
La farfalla non sa
il colore delle sue ali

Down's syndrome
A butterfly doesn't know
the color of its wings

Patrick Sweeney

hillside cockleburs
the boy
not pictured

when she stopped believing
in the tooth fairy
her teeth just fell out

the widening rings of raindrops
in the black puddle
have made me late

everything in the Universe
that is not
a flea

little sister
how lonely to have fallen
drunk in the street

kneeling in meadow rue
all my weight
on a sharp stone

yellow ironweed
the fingers of the uncle
who taught me checkers

Rich Schilling

harvest moon
teeth scraping
bones

the sun setting deadlines

weight
of the dead
a procession of ants

after the fires only sentence fragments

out of the ocean the birth of a sentence

fall
a future
disappearance

Victor Ortiz

her self-portraits
on a clothesline
mounted butterflies

in the house
all day
not a blue whale in sight

deeper
into the mirror
into the future

Jack Galmitz

I love that tune
you in the tree
me on the ground

Lucy Whitehead

eight minutes
from the sun
a dandelion in shade

moonlit night
a silver glow
to every thorn

old friends
back in touch
butterflies at the window

shucking clams...
the full moon slips
out of a cloud

Agnes Eva Savich

a leap of fish mouthing monads on the surface

Valentina Ranaldi-Adams

VISITS

nighttime
you visit me
in my dream

daytime
I visit you
at your grave

Tiffany Shaw-Diaz

if not for arias / I would have / breathed / in dirt

threading / a cosmos a garden / together / buck moon

the black / bird sings / why then / loaded guns

Hifsa Ashraf

blackendraining

autumn wind
a refugee child gathers
the fallen berries

refugee camp
a teenage walks
the tacky dog

Peter Newton

rain
drop by
rain
drop hop
scotch
ing it
home

when last we met circus clouds

a
cormorant
open to the sun
surrender
pose

DOUBLE RAINBOW

double rainbow
if I didn't know
any better

double rainbow
only the kids reaching up
with empty hands

the chances
of standing graveside
double rainbow

watching it dry
together
double rainbow

double rainbow
under
its spell

Scott Metz

the milky way an afterthought
a hand
ful of
warm sea snail
shells
.
path a
long the falls
an
obit
u
ary
al
so
pools&
leave
s

until they crush them but he's not talking to him about these trees

ask strangers about berries

is that the creek mouth or is that you

mountains on the other side of her fireflies

do you imagine it's one frog or more than one how
about
now

for a little while
a little beach
opens up

nearly almost all the buttons buttoned to the sea gull

o she barely whispered stars

at some
point a berry
was bound
to speak
to her

alone
with
her
pine
cone
double
speak

like i threw nothing out
the door
the dandelion seed

path s thr ugh the wild flowers

tide
table
&
ice
water
always
on
the
table
now

David Giannini

Weather & Eve,
Six End - of - Year Variations

A front propagating an upper level trough.

1.

Adam on Eve / Eve on Adam ,
later finding the first way
of naming, discovering

words coming to be

were also children to
regale them and all of us
as one in/formation.

2.

Whisper drift
    of snow sloughing
away. Day in
    what remains.

Wisp or rift
    of *now* slowing
its rays. An eve,
    what it claims.

3.

Not knot, who's there? White,
a storm wanders in *might*.
You still wonder what *could*
have happened that eve
to the slingshot? Some pea
stones still shoot through those woods.

4.

Of four black squirrels under birdfeeders
searching snow for dropped nuts and seeds
we name each Eve Ning, which seems right,
each indistinguishable as night from night.

5.

On stormy eves of Solstice and Christmas
to unwrap your instruments of joy,
the toys of your senses!

6.

Say a bygone bun, a 'soul cake'
of the medieval tradition of

feeding the poor, honoring the dead.

Say a piece of animal left out, a bit
of fleshy bone in gnomon shadow,

showing us time finished and ahead.

Say on New Year's, this atom eve,
a resolution resolved in the saying. Say

it is so and in the saying comes to be.

Kristen Lindquist

twelfth birthday
damselflies shifting
from one reed to another

end of a good story
widow skimmers circling
the lily pond

tiger lilies
a time in my life
when I wore orange

Kelly Sauvage Angel

growing fonder of your absinthe

pissing my wine cask dog moon

chapel garden
the sudden flutter
of your shadow

the teat from which diogenes leaks

pouring salt in the womb

and, i
flesh-bound
butterfly

Alegria Imperial

SIGHTED

cotton-clouds
creeping in
on broken syllables

a whiteness
filling up between bodies
un-confessed

wind-spent
the fig's pelts
inside out

FINAGLED TALE

on boots of birch they're slicing crazed waves
threadbare on crags caked brine spoon-feeding their despair
entwined by colonies of seaweed eyes mirroring holes

as if
a soppy sky
truly
has the sniffles

Rosa Maria Di Salvatore

mare agitato...
sapore di sale
sulle labbra

rough sea...
taste of salt
on my lips

Hansha Teki

late cold snap
more than an echo
each breath becoming
the morepork
foreshadowing
what it's not
my near absence

SHARPER THAN SILK

with *John McManus*

resting in the shade
of a rock pool
crab skeletons

daylight reflections caught
by a pincer movement

just beyond
the scorpion's claws
a new moon

scissored
between starry streams
a dark somewhere

shears covered with cobwebs
in the gloom of dad's shed

sharper than silk
the strands of belonging
to our origins

John McManus

hospital corridor
a girl offers me
her unicorn

faltering light
I add thickener
to dad's cocoa

ancient battlefield
an elderly couple
scowl at each other

rusting hulk
the weight of this guilt
I've carried for years

cold snap
no kisses at the end
of her message

Eufemia Griffo

conchiglie rovesciate
il suono del mare
sepolto nella sabbia

upturned shells
the sound of sea
buried in the sand

albero di faggio
le lunghe radici
dei ricordi d' infanzia

Beech tree
the long roots
of childhood memories

antico forno
nelle mani di mia nonna
pane appena sfornato

ancient oven
in my grandmother's hands
freshly baked bread

già autunno
l'ultima danza
delle foglie di betulla

already autumn
the last dance
of the birch leaves

Lisa Espenmiller

recovery room -
from the fog
your full moon face

wind-whipped her wild fragility forest

shoulder to shoulder
against the waves
a protest of stones

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

pioggia battente
trovar parole
per una ninna nanna

pouring rain
finding words
for a lullaby

Madhuri Pillai

now just a slippery verb

lengthening days sloshing around the park mud hued dogs

diminishing moon my crescent frame

seven mynahs on an empty oak missing omen

George Swede

switchbacks
one past gazes into
another

with nothing to say
and forced onto a blank page
the words growing belligerent

afterlife dusting the urn

self-understanding ebb tide debris

tidal pools 50th high school reunion

the narrow road narrows morphine pump

my first years, 1940-45
sirens and ruins—in the hold
of the giant spruce
more cones than bombs
dropped on Dresden

this ant carrying
a leaf can bear up to 50 times
its weight as well as
the burden of any
literary device

the blue sky
blurred by
green buds
my brain
on a tray

Dennys Cambarau

Il retrogusto amaro della birra
La mia vita

The bitter aftertaste of beer
My life

Elisa Theriana

going home
streetlights and the moon
side by side

the sisters
with my mother's eyes...
blue hydrangea

Maria Concetta Conti

old wives' tale
one kiss under
the falling stars

mid August
her lost memory
his name

Valentina Meloni

le braccia aperte
in segno di accoglienza…
vola un gabbiano

open arms
signalling welcome ...
a seagull's flight

fragilità…
minuscole conchiglie
alla deriva

fragility…
tiny shells
adrift

sferza la battima —
un guscio di diodora
inascoltato

choppy shoreline —
a diodora shell
unheard

liquefacendosi
cancella ogni confine
il cielo d'indaco

indigo sky
no more border
- it liquefies

conca di luna
sugli embrici invecchiati
guazza di stelle

moon bowl –
on the aged roof tiles
star dew

Tim Murphy

lost moon in the sea the scent of a city

open bowl the dialectic of love

trading post the cedar love letters

in back of an idiom yellow canaries

into the cactus core white night

Taofeek Ayeyemi

bush burning
stretches wider . . .
harmattan

morning jog . . .
my slippers stuck
in the mud

Sonam Chhoki

Word Cairn

sky burial
thighbone trumpets call
the mountain guardians

roasted barley smoke
a lammergeier approa-
ches
in slow shadow

rise and fall of chants
to the hollow boom
of the cataract

crackling prayer flags
the mantras scatter
to the wind

Eternal Autumn

There's a tinge of yellow to the silver birches by the entrance to Auschwitz. It is autumn, the season of elegy. Sunlight breaks through a light mist as we walk in the darkness of the Jews, Poles and Roma who arrived with their bags and suitcases. Our guide is an intense, young Pole with a gaunt face and pensive eyes.

"They thought they were being relocated to a new place," he says. His soft voice has a dirge-like tone.

We enter an underground chamber designed to resemble a shower room, where those selected for immediate death took off their clothes believing they were going to take a shower.

"800 to 2000 were herded into this room.The Sonderkommandos locked the door and dropped cans of Zyklon B," our guide points to the scratch marks, the last testaments of those who clawed into each other and the walls. The pendant ceiling lights heighten the gloom.
The next room has a ceiling-to-floor glass display of personal belongings. Ballet shoes lie amongst dolls, combs, glasses, false teeth, shaving bowls and suitcases, some of which bear the names and addresses of the owners.

as if
still waiting to be claimed
a leather suitcase
in Auschwitz with the name:
M. FRANK, HOLLAND*

In the crematorium large metal trolleys which carried the bodies still stand on the tracks . The ovens were destroyed at the approach of the Allies. There's a pervading smell of smoke.

bombed ovens
lie in heaps of charred bricks . . .
a cartography
of the prodigious black
of the human mind*

It begins to drizzle as we approach the "accommodation barracks" which were mo-

delled on horse stables. We meet a group of young men with kippot and carrying a white banner. Their plaintive voices fill the dark hut where the prisoners once huddled on the wooden pallets. Here and there, we can make out the scribblings on the bunks.

in the faint light
worm-worn and illegible
words furtively etched
on wooden sleeping pallets
in rows of airless huts*

Our guide uses no notes as if he has imbibed the very indigence of spirit of the place and he is charged with a compulsion to talk the sufferings and memories into our memories. As we take leave he says he will be back the next morning.

I am filled with consternation by how removed my own country was from the horrors of the war and the holocaust. Celan's words haunt me:
"When the silent one comes and beheads the tulips:

Who wins?
Who loses?" **

silhouette
of Arbeit Macht Frei
against colonies
of abandoned crow nests . . .
this shrine to our time-wound***

Notes:

* The tanka were published in Skylark 2:1, Summer 2014

** Chanson of a Lady in the Shade from Paul Celan: Selected Poem Trans. M. Hamburg, Penguin Books, 1987.

*** time-wound: I have taken this concept from Yves Bonnefoy's writings, notably The Arrière-pays in which he talks about how a place is imbued with a force of revelation not only of elevated beauty and thought but also of a 'penury' of spirit and the vicissitudes of life itself. This is not altogether dissimilar to the Tibetan Buddhist

concept of a landscape being densely-packed with gods, demons and spirits (lha, dü, dre). Thus, a place can be imbued with the sacred energy of the good (lha) or the destructive energy of the demons and evil spirits (dü, dre).

The Essence of Being

It is the start of her apprenticeship to the oracle and young Lemo is full of questions.

“Why do we turn to the mountains? Why not the towering cypress that pierces the clouds or the foaming plunge of the waterfall that can be seen from the next valley?”

"The mountain is the abode of Lha Chen-mo, the Great Goddess,” the old oracle says quietly.

“How do we know she hears our prayers?”

“Her blessing comes in the icy blast on the high pass, in the eddies in the stream, in the deep shadow of the walnut tree and the glow of the sun on the old Mani wall.”

“What does she look like?” Lemo asks with the persistence of a ten-year old.

"The sun is her parasol, the moon, her crown. She leaves footprints in the stars.”

“What about darkness?”

“It is the cord to her womb of the night. You are held, nurtured and reborn each dawn.”

“What happens when we die?”

“That depends on how we live each day in this life."

Lucia Cardillo

compagni di viaggio…
due semi di tarassaco
uniti nel vento

fellow travellers ...
two dandelion seeds
together in wind

Angela Giordano

le prime luci
il soffio del maestrale tra le persiane

the first lights
the breath of the mistral between the shutters

mare in tempesta
una vela e un gabbiano cavalcano le onde

stormy sea
a sail and a gull ride the waves

all'ombra del pero riposa il nonno
canicola

in the shade of the pear rests the grandfather
heat wave

cappello di paglia
piccoli ricami sul viso abbronzato

straw hat
small embroidery on the tanned face

Ingrid Bruck

flank-to-flank
two unharnessed work-horses
in the pasture

Sijo

Earth and moon move together, they move in sync with the sun
sun tugs a train of planets, my family has nine children
Dana, number three, earth sister, and she calls me Mercury

Oceanfront Redevelopment

I hide ocean poems in the house,
a parting gift the wrecking ball finds

Matilde Cherchi

Ortensia rosa
Nessuno che ascolti
la mia storia

Pink hydrangea
no one to listen
to my story

Il calabrone
sfiora la margherita
Non farmi male

The hornet
browsing a daisy
doesn't hurt me

Fiore tra i sassi
Tanta solitudine
non mi stupisce

Flowers from the stones
all this loneliness
doesn't surprise me

Tela di ragno
Il ventaglio smuove
appena l`aria

Spider web —
the folding fan barely
moves the air

Nuvole rosa
Del temporale di ieri
rimane il vento

Those pink clouds
of yesterday's storm —
the wind remains

Acetosella
Ridere di me stessa
di tanto in tanto

Wood sorrel —
laughing at myself
time to time

Antonella Tomasello

Scorci d'estate
Il cinguettio di un fringuello
La speranza

Glimpses of summer
The chirping of a finch
Hope

Alessandra Delle Fratte

rumore bianco —
un eco di cicale
culla i miei sogni

white noise —
an echo of cicadas
cradles my dreams

cicale in coro —
l'unica compagnia
di questa estate

cicadas chorus —
the only company
in this summer

Vincenzo Adamo

il mendicante
scrivendo poesie
parla con l'anima

The beggar
writing poems
speaks with the soul

il sole picchia-
le farfalle di ieri
solo un giorno

the sun beats-
yesterday's butterflies
just one day

Ashish Narain

Letting Go

When it ends
all that's left
is the memory

of chants
used for the many
who have gone before

the waning sun
in the wrinkles
round your eyes

and the ashes
soon to disappear
into young waters

Dave Read

"ROCK"

I can hold
a rock in my hand,
let my finger glide
across its water-smoothed
surface, squeeze its print
into my palm,
feel its weight
as I prepare to throw it,
and the lightness
of its absence
on release.
While the word "rock"
is merely a label,
the roll of its R
and the sudden
and shocking stop of Ock
are real in my mouth.
I can gather "rock" inside
a slingshot sentence,
stretch it back,
direct it with a force
that allows it to shatter
the metaphorical window
at which
it was aimed.

Robert Christian

In the end
I turn no longer
in the sun or dark or
in imagined combat
or love for
Man including me
will hurt himself and be
his own worst enemy
to put it as cliche
or forgotten nuances of
the infinite guessed at or
who knows reached
as each deserves or
will find complete

Adjei Agyei-Baah

another birthday
I feign sick
for breakfast in bed

Anna Cates

Buckeyes

Yesterday, along the bike trail, one struck me atop the
head. Perhaps unfairly, I blamed a squirrel.

thunderheads . . .
a couple sitting apart
at the bus stop

Reka Nyitrai

is father
trying to send me a
message?
an earthworm sings

om—
through a sheep's skull
liquid sky

melancholy—
grasses holding the shape
of a crow's feet

John Dunphy

GARMENTS

for the first time
a Vietnam veteran wears
his uniform in public

open coffin

homeless shelter
Santa hands out
donated used coats

wino alley --
the new guy still wears
his army jacket

yard sale
a christening dress damp
from raindrops

resale store
a student and her teacher shop
for a prom dress

Decoration Day parade
a veteran's uniform
reeks of mothballs

commencement ceremony
a migrant farm worker adjusts
his daughter's mortarboard