To my beloved granddaughters
Ava, Claire, and Diana
Other books by Robert H. Deluty

 Within and Between: Poems (2000)
  Treasuring the Details: Poems (2005)
 Present Sense: New and Selected Poems (2005)
 Specks and Flashes: Poems (2006)
 Infinity in the Palm of One’s Hand: Poems (2006)
 Giving Subtlety to the Simple: Poems (2006)
  In the Moment: Poems (2007)
  Hearing the Grass Grow: Poems (2007)
 In Praise of the Commonplace: Poems (2008)
 Hour/Minute/Second Helpings: Poems (2008)
  Ripples to the Horizon: Poems (2008)
  As With Sunbeams: Poems (2008)
 Fractions of Eternity: Poems (2009)
 Giving the Mundane Its Due: Poems (2009)
  Unfolding: Poems (2009)
  Right Simple: Poems (2009)
  A Zoo In A Jungle: Poems (2010)
  Waiting for the Echo: Poems (2010)
 Dancing With Their Shadows: Poems (2010)
 Making Riddles Out of Answers: Poems (2011)
 Toward Darkness, Toward Light: Poems (2011)
 Too Old To Know Everything: Poems (2011)
 Between Nothing and All: Poems (2011)
 Unacknowledged Miracles: Poems (2012)
  Particles of Life: Poems (2012)
  Through Others’ Eyes: Poems (2012)
 The Inventor as Observer: Poems (2013)
 The Knife and the Pumpkin: Poems (2013)
 Entering Through the Window: Poems (2013)
 Saluting from the Shore: Poems (2013)
 Opening the Doors of Perception: Poems (2014)
 Rock Piles and Cathedrals: Poems (2014)
  Gifts in Disguise: Poems (2014)
  Human Recordings: Poems (2014)
  On the Tightrope: Poems (2016)
 Saved by Imagination and Humor: Poems (2016)
  Souls and Senses: Poems (2017)
 The Noblest Pleasure: Poems (2017)
 Removing the Filters: Poems (2018)
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the corn farmer

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writing hedge maze

To Each Their Own

tired Mom eyeing
miserable teen
Alaskans calling
musicians calling
therapists calling

hugging their grandson
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co-workers praising
aged six

the mythologist
math tutor
nicknaming
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the roofer
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Prague racer
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arm wrestler’s folks
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48  his girlfriend driving
   fluish family
   *Lipton* exec
   settling for par
   *Might you kill yourself?*

49  out of hotdogs
   math teacher
   twin babies kissing
   her blind date
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50  toddler believing
   her attorney
   their teenager
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    kindergartner
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    calling his classes
    deaf man’s wife
a boy mishearing
diamond merchant
young math student
aged two
*Stop the madness!*

Quotation (Charles Eames)

No-Brainer

ten-year-old Joe West
the farmer
trying to convince
subway riders
ESL student

Adeline Moore
Robin Holmes
Alonso Greene
Minnie Brewer
Sue M. Aull

Turkish man cursing
traveling oarsmen
at the door
mathematician
the punster

old, blind woman
the body artist
history teacher
Aunt Rose asserting
*How did it go?*
her demented Dad
basketball fan (I)
basketball fan (II)
basketball fan (III)
six-year-old Jun Zhao

therapy session
the grocer
the teen feeling
the five year-old
Dr. Brad Pfister

a prof persuading
outraged janitors
calling in sick (I)
calling in sick (II)
after a big lunch

jailed dental student
the clairvoyant
hopelessness waning
a geographer
deaf, palsied child

a third grader
hating being viewed
the maitre d’
mortician Beth Ames
Grandpa admitting
the hypnotist
father of five
Limans loving
Taizis hating
the prof avowing

What shall we do?
at her husband's wake
closing early
asked what (I)
asked what (II)

tourists terming
her child inquiring
his child inquiring
all passengers gone
the classicist

asking the vet (I)
asking the vet (II)
on the cover
defining (I)
defining (II)

confused third grader
nine-year-old writer (I)
nine-year-old writer (II)
a teen screaming
the bird watcher
72 in bed with strep
dieting exec
Mom hoping
golf course cafe
middle-aged man

73 In the Academy

74 the cashier
a teen informing
Oahuan dancers
the shopaholic
asking his swim coach

75 her child asserting
the CPA
telling her father
the capo
deeply regretting

76 French restaurant
rabbis debating
her child declaring
his child declaring
buying a treadmill

77 It’s the Thought that Counts
Sweden’s capital? Finland’s capital?
gas station’s john Muslim heretic Jewish heretic

gasoline dealer the young dentist What’s a GPA?
visiting New York ailurophile Katz

Author’s Note
Mysteries, Visible and Invisible
Composing is like driving down a foggy road toward a house. Slowly you see more details of the house - the color of the slates and bricks, the shape of the windows. The notes are the bricks and the mortar of the house.

Benjamin Britten
downtown . . . noticing
the woman begging for cash
has manicured nails

faculty meeting . . .
rating his colleagues on
self-righteousness

their aunt revealing
_Christ_ inked on her right arm,
_Clooney_ on her left

post-cruise . . . trying
to repress memories of
four desserts at lunch

post-cruise . . . trying
to purge visions of sunburned,
tattooed torsos
Robert H. Deluty

Butte first grader
confusing North Korea
with North Dakota

poor Jamaican boy
daydreaming of, one day,
being a tourist

nicknaming
her childless-by-choice daughter
*The Coward*

her father-in-law
noting he loves animals:
*They're so delicious*

reading the obit
of her ex, hoping to see
the words *utter dolt*
in Bali,
Dutch tourists painting tulips
on an elephant

their teen assuming
Jerry Lewis wrote and sang
*Great Balls of Fire*

their teen assuming
Jerry Lee Lewis teamed
with Dean Martin

gun lovers debate
which U.S. state looks most
like a firearm

*High Tops* store owner
selling *Vans, Converse* sneakers
and ten gallon hats
six-year-old twins
wishing the Olympics
had hide-and-seek

Why’d you marry Pop? . . .
Mom noting He was the best
of the schmucks out there

track star, poet
asserting they’re both experts
on meters and feet

five-year-old Texan
believing she’s allergic
to penguins

seven-foot man,
his five-foot date discussing
graphs
on the stand . . .

stating to the jury

*I'm kinda sorry*

at sentencing . . .

stating to the judge

*My lawyer sucks*

post-Harvey . . .

returning home to find
gators in his den

the wordsmith
calling the bar of soap

*a bathday cake*

told to get in shape,

the obese teen responding

*Circles are fine shapes*
at 6:00 p.m.,
announcing to the barfly

*Dinner is poured*

waking her husband
to tell him how much she hates
her insomnia

his first grader
assuming that *footage* means
your shoe size

her first grader
assuming that *footage* means
how old your toes are

their math professor
describing the beauty
of zero
Who wrote “Hughie”? . . .
Penn State freshman replying

Hugh Gino Neill

Who wrote “Daisy Miller”? . . .
Kent State freshman answering

Jesse James

Who wrote “Vieux Carré”? . . .
Ball State freshman responding

Kentucky Williams

the car mechanic
boasting to neighbors about
his fine motor skills

holding a cracked vase,
her six-year-old son noting

To forgive, divine
fitness center . . .
Dad carrying in his bag
a flask of bourbon

fitness center . . .
Gramps carrying in his bag
a pinochle deck

her physician
asserting the narcissist
has an I problem

visualizing
a third piece of apple pie
while eating the first
centenarian,
sharp as a tack, visiting
her demented sons
young art student
believing Claude’s last name
was Money

young music student
believing Monk’s first name
was Felonious

Uncle Harold
describing piñatas as
*party animals*

a fourth grader
inquiring which dinosaurs
were the coolest

her brother-in-law
driving through an ice storm
for a cigarette
the male model
boasting that he is paid
handsomely

asked what they should name
the newborn, their three year-old
answering Baby

power couple’s friends
calling Anne and Doug Carr
AC/DC

skydiving elder
telling his adult daughter
he’s going bowling

the corn farmer,
eyeing his bumper crop,
grins from ear to ear
a young boy asking
the priest why Toledo, smoke,
and crap are holy

shocked West Texan
learning there’s an Odessa
in Ukraine

the two year-old
fearing the squeaks made
by her new shoes

orthopedist
calling the prison riot

*a joint flare-up*

asked why she loves chess,
the Grandmaster responding

*Queens can beat kings*
Better than Prozac

After a workday
Filled with frustration,
Anger and disappointment,
He is met at the front door
By his three-year-old daughter,
Who offers him a huge hug
While shouting with delight,
*I just sneezed and tooted*
*At the same time!*
for his last lecture,
the prof wearing a top hat
and tight leather pants

convincing
a high school freshman Vassar
plays in the Big Ten

convincing
a high school junior Auburn
is the ninth Ivy

convincing
a high school senior Oxford
is in Miami

on his deathbed
whispering to the grandkids

*Buy low, sell high*
asked why he cheated
on the practice test, her son
states *Force of habit*

young Erica
boasting that her name is most
of America

young Neville
boasting that his name
contains *evil*

an awed boy watching
a man in the locker room
shaving his head

BYU prof
rejoicing seeing *Coke*
sold on campus
Baptist Bronx schoolboy
irked that, this year, Yom Kippur
falls on a weekend

Kansas couple
christening their new sheep farm
Ewetopia

the bride and groom
arriving at the church
on unicycles

their four year-old
stating why she wants no sibs:
Too ‘spensive

the seer calling
tarot cards futuristic
observation decks
queried if she wants
earrings of silver or gold,
Mom writes Either ore

the teenaged rower
admitting that he lives
to make waves

Venus’ closest star? . . .
the astronomy student
replies Serena

Uncle Butch calling
The Godfather trilogy
Sicilian Star Wars

Grandma noting
if quibbling Gramps were a fish,
he’d be a carp
the euphemist
describing *falling down* as
*testing gravity*

the euphemist
describing *jalopies* as
*pre-loved vehicles*

the euphemist
describing *death* as
*post-retirement*

nurse Jane Unger
naming her child Irene Claire
for the monogram

*Give me a sentence . . .*
the first grader responding

*Twenty-five to life*
her two year-old
explaining the toilet’s clog:

*Baby bear swimming*

New York City street . . .
two pigeons fighting over
a kasha knish

the gardener
calling *genealogies*

*systems of roots*

April Fool’s Day . . .
the grocer placing canned clams
amidst kosher foods

*Take up a sport!* . . .

his pre-teen responding

*How about poker?*
the zookeeper
naming the old porcupine
Slowpoke

hard-hatted Nana
swinging a crowbar at
her old kitchen wall

the minister
choosing the license plate
BKIND

the librarian
choosing the license plate
BQUIET

the oncologist
choosing the license plate
B9
calling Ma’s Mom,
a world-class baker, 
Grammuffin
asked what he wants
for his third birthday, their son
responding More

the scholar
describing Mensa as
a mental bloc

Great-Uncle Vin
claiming his name is short
for Vintage

classics prof
defining thy as
your of yore
Queens diner, at dawn . . .
three old ladies in a booth
singing *Twist and Shout*

psychotherapist
portraying OCD as
*a routine problem*

loving basketball,
the eight year-old stating *swish*
is the world’s best sound

cosmetologist,
at the bar, noting her love
of blush wines

cosmetologist,
down south, expressing her love
for Baton Rouge
denied a cookie,
her two year-old screaming
Love you never!

anthropologists
Walter and Ruth Mann naming
their newborn Hugh

the third grader
asking if one trouser leg
is called a pant

her spouse getting
a thought bubble tattoo
on his shaved head

ornithologist
describing nests as
twitter sites
Dad and Grandpa,

both carpenters, regarding

sawdust as glitter

first grade twins’ Mom

begging them to take judo

for the free uniforms

Boston sailor

viewing the swap for Kyrie

as a trade win

questioning

his girlfriend why she was named

Lyllyan

questioning

her boyfriend why he was named

Seymour Joe
watching her neighbor
slapping his young son for
walking on tiptoes

going accountant
admitting that he adores
checking figures

city councilman
calling the grocery stores
  _chambers of commerce_

NHL’s Devils
enjoying the irony
of playing on ice

demented man’s spouse
recalling when he would read
three books per week
offensive guard
imagining the QB
is his Grandma

Austin Beaumont
christening his twin boys
Dallas and Houston

Raleigh barber
loving his town’s anagram:
ha'ir gel

Columbus wrestlers
loving their town’s anagram:
sumo club

impoverished mime
describing his work as
nothing to speak of
Even the details of a rifle, which are nothing but mechanical, if they are made carefully, with attention, become beautiful, satisfying.

Michael Cimino
Constructive Feedback

The psychology professor
Is unsure whether to laugh,
Cry or scream as he reads
The end-of-semester evaluation
Written by a sophomore major:
You look exactly like the guy
Who cleans our gutters, so
I couldn’t take anything
You said seriously
their server

listing tips as things

worth waiting for

after losing his glove,

the street hockey goalie using

a catcher’s mitt

newspaperman

referring to wine as

a press release

on the interstate,

spotting in the middle lane

a bathroom scale

upon seasoning

the turkey, Aunt Lu noting

I’ve thyme on my hands
wiry Lech Nowak
claiming he’s a natural
for Pole vaulting

lithe Maja Wojcik
claiming she’s a natural
for Pole dancing

a twelfth grader
describing the prom as

*a senior moment*

two deans debating
whether Donald or Rudy
is the bigger douche

Aunt Rosita
urging her Type A grandson
to relax harder
fly fishermen
referring to their outing
as a cast party

pre-Thanksgiving meal . . .
young vegan Jews requesting
turkey-shaped latkes

*Times* editor
viewing herself as
a paper cutter

elderly patient
telling his doctor *shingles*
should be plural

job interviewer
asking if he’d prefer death
by jumping or drowning
Where is Managua? . . .
the eighth grader responding

Guacamola

Where is Jakarta? . . .
the ninth grader answering

Indonesia

the teen with OCD
explaining why sloppy joes
are sinful

Juneau native
noting she resides in

a detached state

dentist, lawyer
comparing how they work
on retainers
young chef believing
no one before him thought of

Go take a leek

hitchhiker
and his lift . . . both hoping
the other’s not nuts

his girlfriend
telling her folks he’s not fat,
just really round

Bermuda tour guides . . .
polite, funny, providing
opposite info

poor elder
telling his grandkids to sing
when they’re hungry
her friend Norm
asserting he’s just
an average guy

hog selling spouses
describing themselves as
*squealer dealers*

the old scientist
worrying that heaven
won’t be challenging

the old soldier
worrying that heaven
will be too serene

Nashville singer
calling the world atlas
*a country album*
policemen
referring to themselves
as booking agents

the farmer watching
his malfunctioning baler
go haywire

2:00 p.m. . . . the shrink
noting his new outpatient
is wearing p.j.’s

advertising
the poetry slam final
as verse vs. verse

writing hedge maze,
grudge match, orange marmalade,
she sees hidden gems
To Each Their Own

A five year-old approaches
With his father the restroom section
Of the medical office building.
Upon learning the signs on the doors
Read *Men, Women, and Janitor*;
The puzzled child inquires
In what special ways
Do janitors pee and poop.
tired Mom eyeing
her twin three year-olds bolt from
the mall Santa’s lap

miserable teen
hoping to be, someday,
merely glum

Alaskans calling
the Cronkite/Brinkley era
*Anchor Age*

musicians calling
the tribute band era
*Cover Age*

therapists calling
the Freud/Adler era
*Shrink Age*
hugging their grandson
for shouting at his mother
her piercings are vile

EMTs staring
at the unconscious man's chest:
a DNR tattoo

*How was your birthday? . . .*
the five year-old answering
*Underwhelming*

coworkers praising
the software developer
for his *app-titude*

aged six . . . foster child
learning his birth Mom set
his birth Dad on fire
the mythologist
describing King Midas
as *gilt-ridden*

math tutor
noting arcs don’t come
full circle

nicknaming
his clumsy pal, Ken Glass,
Bro

pre-med student
confusing *osteopath*
with *sociopath*

Marxist parents
insisting their PTA
be class conscious
How do I look? . . .
her moronic new husband
replying So-so

high school’s coolest kid
voicing to friends his terror
of losing status

moonshiners calling
paintings of their equipment
still lifes

Pastor Simms warning
a fireman that Stop, Drop, Roll
won’t work in hell

their nine year-old
announcing I’m not designed
to be happy
Intro Psych exam . . .
a freshman answering

*Edifice Complex*

World Lit exam . . .
a sophomore responding

*Platypus Rex*

young sprinter
dreaming of Olympic gold
while fast asleep

the math prof seeing
a map of Utah, thinking

*Concave hexagon*

the poet seeing
a map of Utah, thinking

*Six-sided staid state*
eager musician,
out fishing, hoping to catch
a bass soon

trick-or-treating girl,
dressed as a pirate, holding
her eye-patched cat

their teen ignoring
the sign *Heads Up! Cross the Street*,

*Then Update Facebook*

Granddad
defining *isn’t* as

*ain’t right*

January 1st . . .
meeting his fraternal twin
born the prior year
the homophobe
disliking the term
*gentleman*

the homophobe
despising the term
*dress pants*

the roofer
asserting his best work
is on the house

questioned
*What are baseball and softball?*,
the coach stating *Orbs*

at *Baskin Robbins* . . .
the rare coin collector
requesting mint chip
Moscow miler

calling her early years

*Russian past*

Prague racer

calling his country’s banner

*Czechered flag*

Helsinki skier

calling her facial wrinkle

*Finnish line*

arm wrestler’s folks

gleeful their son has the match

well in hand

the reverend

referring to *Amen* as

*a service call*
his girlfriend driving
while applying eye makeup
with both hands

flush family,
wearing surgical masks,
open Christmas gifts

*Lipton exec*
displaying vanity plates
*T 4 2*

settling for par,
the old golfer singing

*Bye Bye Birdie*

*Might you kill yourself? . . .*

her teenaged patient replies

*No, only others*
out of hot dogs,
the ballpark vendor making
a concession speech

math teacher
calling medians and modes
mean relatives

twin babies kissing
Grandma’s cheeks with binkies
in their mouths

her blind date
scraping mud from his boots
with a diner’s spoon

Your favorite things? . . .
the job candidate responds
Beer, airports, group sex
toddler believing
Gramps’ ever-present toothpick
is part of his face

her attorney
calling the estate tax
a passing concern

their teenager
asserting confidence
beats expertise

Describe your mother . . .
his new patient answering
Devil incarnate

Describe your father . . .
his new patient answering
Pass
young Rick Kleiner
feeling he’s destined to sell
large, plush chairs

young Ophelia Payne
feeling she’s destined to work
with trauma victims

French Antilles guide
noting that enchant is part
of his islands

kindergartner
referring to kebabs
as sticky food

their third grader boasts
he knows how to say shit
in twelve languages
The word you like most? . . .
Aunt Margaret responding
Serendipity

The word you like most? . . .
Uncle Edmund responding
Testicular

her three-year-old son
running through the house naked
except for earmuffs

calling his classes
following geometry
the aftermath

deaf man’s wife
claiming he’s simply
not listening
a boy mishearing

*Maurice Chevalier* as

*Maury’s Chevrolet*

diamond merchant
telling shoppers a story
that doesn’t ring true

young math student
creating the indoor sport

*times table tennis*

aged two . . . fingering
his lunch while holding aloft
an unused fork

*Stop the madness!* . . .

her grandson replying

*But I’m not angry*
The details are not the details.
They make the design.

Charles Eames
No-Brainer

After announcing,
At age fifty-eight, his retirement
As a senior partner in an elite
Washington DC law firm
To care for his MS-stricken spouse,
Ailing parents and depressed son,
He is asked by a colleague

How do you go from
Being a somebody to
A nobody?
ten-year-old Joe West
insisting that his first name
be pronounced Go

the farmer
descrribing hens as
feathered layers

trying to convince
his Jewish girlfriend
scrapple is kosher

subway riders
studying the young man
clipping his toenails

ESL student
confusing semen
with sermon
Adeline Moore
considering a career
in screenwriting

Robin Holmes
considering a career
in burglary

Alonso Greene
considering a career
in gardening

Minnie Brewer
considering a career
in beer making

Sue M. Aull
considering a career
in civil law
Turkish man cursing
as he learns how to pronounce

*though, through, thought*

traveling oarsmen
going back home after
a long rowed trip

at the door, striking
two Jehovah’s Witnesses
with her rosary

mathematician
defining *area* as

*side by side*

the punster
regarding a deep groan as
the perfect reward
old, blind woman
singing to her ailing Peke

Jump, jump for my love

the body artist
learning *Edinburgh Tattoos*
involve drums, bagpipes

history teacher
defining the word *castle*
as *knight 'hood*

Aunt Rose asserting
blessing a sneezing stranger
is simply wrong

*How did it go? . . .*
driver’s ed student replying

*Great - I hit nothing*
her demented Dad
placing his house keys
in the microwave

basketball fan
calling obscene language
*foul lines*

basketball fan
calling a bowled gutterball
*alley oops*

basketball fan
calling rugs bestowed gratis
*free throws*

six-year-old Jun Zhao
asking Paul O’Toole if O
is his middle name
therapy session . . .

the sailing couple noting
they’re drifting apart

the grocer
defining the word *eat* as
*make a fast stop*

the teen feeling
her prom date’s tuxedo
is not suitable

the five year-old
regarding bagels as
*real plain donuts*

Dr. Brad Pfister
deeming his last name’s P
*simply obnoxious*
a prof persuading
his students that *Karlo*
was a Marx Brother

outraged janitors
demanding from management
sweeping reforms

calling in sick . . .
the tool salesman noting
he wrenched his neck

calling in sick . . .
the house builder noting
his head is pounding

after a big lunch,
their young son rubs his belly,
staking *I'm fed up*
jailed dental student
misunderstanding the term

\textit{cavity search}

the clairvoyant
describing ESP as

\textit{medium power}

hopelessness waning . . .
their suicidal neighbor
torching his rope

a geographer
working on the perfect pun
with Turkey and Greece

deaf, palsied child
hoping for a better deal
in the afterlife
a third grader
asking Siri how come
boys don't like her

hating being viewed
as obsessive-compulsive
by fellow surgeons

the maitre d’
noting that the house salad
is dressed for dinner

mortician Beth Ames
naming her son Dale Owen
for the initials

Grandpa admitting
only cigarettes and Scotch
make him happy
the hypnotist
defining the word *trance* as
*a Pacific state*

father of five
learning the meaning
of *dad bod*

Limans loving
that Peru’s anagram
is *pure*

Taizis hating
that Yemen’s anagram
is *enemy*

the prof avowing
he plans on retiring
the day he’s buried
What shall we do? . . .
seafaring poet responding

Write of passage

at her husband’s wake,
requesting that his brother
stop hitting on her

closing early . . .
the watchmaker explaining

Out of hour hands

asked what
he’d like to become, her son
replying Pope Jake

asked what
she’d like to become, his niece
replying Saint Sue
tourists terming
a London market’s walkways
the British aisles

her child inquiring
why Scott and balls of fire
are so great

his child inquiring
which is holier: a cow
or a mackerel

all passengers gone . . .
renaming their ocean liner
The Crew’s Ship

the classicist
calling dental hygienists
modern flossifers
asking the vet
if cats in Maine and Texas
meow differently

asking the vet
if dogs in France eat better
than those in Britain

on the cover
of *Rolling Stone*, spotting
Elisabeth Moss

defining
as *major talking point*
the word *lectern*

defining
as *baseball stadium player*
the word *organist*
confused third grader
hearing his teacher’s skirt
called very smart

nine-year-old writer
beginning her poem with
On the other hand

nine-year-old writer
beginning his poem with
I hate doing this

a teen screaming
at her Mom to stop being
so understanding

the bird watcher
deeming spotted and barn owls
fly-by-night types
in bed with strep . . .
the painter texts co-workers,
seeking coverage
dieting exec
describing to colleagues
his downsizing

Mom hoping
for more than an air kiss
from her cherished son
golf course cafe
charging for the side salad
a greens fee

middle-aged man
asking which are worse: dad jeans
or dad jokes
In the Academy

Midway through
An utterly abysmal job talk
By a full professor candidate,
The department chair
Turns to the junior colleague
Sitting to her right and
Whispers I can't believe
I shaved my legs for this
the cashier
regarding UPCs as
*checkout lines*

a teen informing
his young sibs *Jesus loves you*,
*but me much more*

Oahuan dancers
describing their leis
*as hula hoops*

the shopaholic
explaining she always
has time to spend

asking his swim coach
whether unshaved eyebrows
will slow him down
her child asserting
any lunch that makes him smile
is a Happy Meal

the CPA
noting his favorite snake
is the adder

telling her father,
a mohel, she’s marrying
a sushi chef

the capo
describing Lucifer as
the underworld boss

deply regretting
gifting her four-year-old son
a brass whistle
French restaurant . . .
calling her spouse a traitor
for declining dessert

rabbis debating
which last name is worse:
Kunstler or Dickman

her child declaring
the number after fourteen
should be fifteen

his child declaring
the spelling of Wednesday
ought to be shortened

buying a treadmill
on-line while devouring
a mammoth éclair
It’s the Thought that Counts

As a Father’s Day gift,
An angry, sullen twelve year-old
Takes two bags of modeling clay
And sculpts a ten-pound octopus,
Taking care that each of its limbs
Ends with a raised middle finger
Sweden’s capital? . . .
a fifth grader responding

Stockholder

Finland’s capital? . . .
a sixth grader responding

Hellskitchen

gas station’s john . . .
the guy at the urinal
singing Waterfalls

Muslim heretic
eating hot cross buns
during Ramadan

Jewish heretic
touring the Spam Museum
on Yom Kippur
gasoline dealer
calling taco stands

Shell stations

the young dentist
discussing with her banker
a bridge loan

What's a GPA? . . .
the Registrar answering

Big mean on campus

visiting New York,
a circus sword swallower
is mugged at knifepoint

ailurophile Katz

naming her newborn triplets
Tom, Bob, and Kitty
Author’s Note

Dr. Robert H. Deluty is Associate Dean Emeritus of the Graduate School at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. A psychology professor at UMBC from 1980 to 2016, he was named Presidential Teaching Professor in 2002. He and his wife, Barbara (a clinical psychologist), live in Ellicott City, Maryland and have two children, Laura and David, and three granddaughters, Ava, Claire, and Diana. Dr. Deluty’s poems and essays have been published in The Wall Street Journal, The Baltimore Sun, The Pegasus Review, Modern Haiku, Voices: The Art and Science of Psychotherapy, Psychiatric Times, Jewish Currents, the Journal of Poetry Therapy, Welcome Home, Muse of Fire, Maryland Family Magazine, Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture, The Faculty Voice, and many other newspapers, journals, and anthologies. Mysteries, Visible and Invisible is his fifty-fifth book.