

# To ARREST MOTION

Poems by

Robert H. Deluty



Otter Bay Books  
BALTIMORE, MD 2020

Copyright © 2020 by Robert H. Deluty  
All rights reserved.

Permission to reproduce in any form  
must be secured from the author.

Please direct all correspondence and book orders to:

Robert H. Deluty  
4783 Ilkley Moor Lane  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Library of Congress Control Number 2019918438  
ISBN 978-1-7323826-3-3

Published by  
Otter Bay Books, Ltd.  
3507 Newland Road  
Baltimore, MD 21218-2513

*Printed in the United States of America*

To  
Barbara

Other books by Robert H. Deluty

- Within and Between: Poems* (2000)  
*The Long and Short of It: Essays and Poems* (2003)  
*Observed and Imagined: Poems and Essays* (2004)  
*The Essence of Moments: Poems* (2004)  
*Treasuring the Details: Poems* (2005)  
*Present Sense: New and Selected Poems* (2005)  
*Glimpses and Snapshots: Poems* (2005)  
*Specks and Flashes: Poems* (2006)  
*Infinity in the Palm of One's Hand: Poems* (2006)  
*Giving Subtilty to the Simple: Poems* (2006)  
*In the Moment: Poems* (2007)  
*A Handful of Sand: Poems* (2007)  
*The Thread of Revelation: Poems & Prose* (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)  
*Walking Through Many Lives: Poems* (2009)  
*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)  
*Invisible Keepsakes: Poetry & Prose* (2010)  
*Dancing With Their Shadows: Poems* (2010)  
*Finding Solace in the Dictionary: Poems* (2010)

*When Silence Is Not An Option: Poems* (2011)  
*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)  
*A Scratch On The Wall: Poems* (2012)  
*Unacknowledged Miracles: Poems* (2012)  
*Particles of Life: Poems* (2012)  
*Through Others' Eyes; Poems* (2012)  
*A Crowded Life: 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)  
*Being Wakeful: Poems* (2015)  
*Worthy of Consideration: Poems* (2015)  
*A Mingled Yarn: Poems* (2015)  
*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)  
*Mysteries, Visible and Invisible: Poems* (2018)  
*Momentary Blessings: Poems* (2019)  
*The Choice of Attention: Poems* (2019)



## Contents

- 1 *Quotation (William Faulkner)*
- 3 Knowledgeable
- 4 her second grader  
the poker player  
the young doctor  
Grandma asserting  
Grandpa asserting
- 5 moving to Tucson  
three ex-cons  
the eight year-old  
the ten year-old  
the twelve year-old
- 6 ESL student (I)  
ESL student (II)  
prof candidate  
dean candidate  
provost candidate
- 7 movie director  
the Boston Celtic  
the attorney  
the pugilist  
the IT tutor

- 8 turning sixty-five  
turning ninety-eight  
visiting Provo  
a martial artist  
V.A. Hospital
- 9 the chef describing  
Trump hater choosing  
*What's your religion?* (I)  
*What's your religion?* (II)  
their fifteen year-old
- 10 a boy wondering  
a girl wondering  
first grader requests  
poker champion  
*Make a wish, Ellie*
- 11 the mailman beams  
*More fruit, Jessica?*  
twisting her ankle  
boy with sarcoma  
fellow golfers
- 12 learning to tell time  
the farm worker  
first grader Lyn Knox  
surf shop owner  
asked how he's feeling

- 13 giving his sister  
her granddaughter  
the smiling convict  
questioned how  
anti-vaxxers
- 14 pre-K imp Anna  
the actress deeming  
*Your grounds for divorce?*  
Chicago rabbi (I)  
Chicago rabbi (II)
- 15 horse farm  
internet café  
Nana regretting  
at her neighbor's door  
old couple choosing
- 16 telling his student  
geography class  
ER nurse  
the geologist  
high school football
- 17 pumpkin farmer  
her rich uncle  
his wealthy aunt  
post *Brinks* truck crash  
their immigrant Dad

- 18 the proud elder  
asked what *buoyant* means  
pre-teen porch pirate  
the meat cutters  
mid-eulogy
- 19 Follow Your Passion
- 20 young Mr. Booth  
the prof describing  
Great-Gran  
Great-Gramps  
after marrying
- 21 the woodworker  
his young son asking  
the referee  
her spouse refusing  
anagram lover
- 22 the chess champion  
MIT freshman  
Great-Uncle Al trying  
Great-Aunt Vi trying  
upon Santa's lap
- 23 homophobe fuming  
San Diego girl  
shoved out of bounds  
the lab scientist  
rabbi's son dreaming

- 24 nine-year-old Dan  
explaining  
the fifth grader  
the sixth grader  
parents claiming
- 25 his mother stating  
his father stating  
Elwood Anderson  
Cornell Kensington  
semi-deaf elder
- 26 after falling  
French I student  
a child suggesting  
fundamentalists  
three Southern ladies
- 27 a teen explaining  
the mirror maker  
*Want a side with that?* (I)  
*Want a side with that?* (II)  
their son assuming
- 29 *Quotation (Anais Nin)*
- 31 pondering why  
tense music teacher  
his great-niece  
mechanics claiming  
a child querying

- 32 IRS agent  
a juror noting  
Nana expounding  
*What's a chorus line?*  
parents, in-laws
- 33 dubbing his wife  
a child wondering  
their Dad regretting  
the math professor  
Easter morning
- 34 retired car salesman  
GI specialist  
the wit defining  
telling his grandson  
mid-session
- 35 a little girl  
an old woman  
Valentine's Day  
Pittsburgh teen  
Miami teen
- 36 Jewish fast day  
her child questioning  
his brother-in-law  
the preacher noting  
Muslim boy dreaming

- 37 Knoxvillians  
a Cubs fan in church  
the manicurist  
telling his coach  
telling her coach
- 38 Sunday School student (I)  
Sunday School student (II)  
Sunday School student (III)  
Sunday School student (IV)  
Sunday School student (V)
- 39 his Mom researching  
his Dad researching  
NFL coach  
NBA coach  
the sailors calling
- 40 a Catholic girl  
her child demanding  
Boston baseball fan  
the trig teacher  
their nephew asking
- 41 aghast Jews learning  
football fan's wife  
five-year-old houseguests  
geography quiz  
the preschooler

- 42 recent convert  
frozen drink vendor  
trans-Atlantic flight  
sci-fi author  
superstar athlete
- 43 sixth grader asking  
post Super Bowl loss (I)  
post Super Bowl loss (II)  
*Your favorite films?*  
economics class
- 44 hearing *big pitcher*  
hearing *right guard*  
demented elder  
*Tums* user noting  
first session ends
- 45 Civil War test (I)  
Civil War test (II)  
a boy querying  
*Microsoft* coder  
NBA center
- 46 eight-year-old cook  
one yard from the tape  
guy at the bar  
Margaret Legg  
a child answering

- 47 Queens tenth grader  
Lubbock tenth grader  
new *Nestea* bottler  
the penitent  
their coach explaining
- 48 *Camry* salesman  
*Hasbro* salesman  
*Do you exercise?* (I)  
*Do you exercise?* (II)  
Sindi and Syril
- 49 their second grader  
Bronx boy in London  
urging his wife  
opting not to cash  
a six-year-old girl
- 50 fast-talking coach  
fifth grade student  
sixth grade student  
Garden State newsman  
the judge
- 51 a tourist in Greece  
asking Aunt Louise  
tap dancing couple  
German teacher  
the shrink raging

- 52 *Coppertone* seller  
his Grandma  
Yom Kippur morning  
TV idol  
dog breeder
- 53 Oscar Oates asking  
Zora Zhang asking  
the brain surgeon  
acupuncturist  
the teen claiming
- 55 *Quotation (George Singleton)*
- 57 Uncle Ike calling  
Great-Gramps believing  
clueless lumberjack  
Atlanta soldiers  
*T-Mobile* rep
- 58 their child musing  
the nun calling  
sub-zero morning  
colleagues describing  
young psychiatrist
- 59 the old man  
the old woman  
skilled bunter  
his mother-in-law  
Judge Morris Lester

- 60 post-chili  
at the tavern (I)  
at the tavern (II)  
at the tavern (III)  
at the tavern (IV)
- 61 her ten year-old  
her twelve year-old  
her fourteen year-old  
*Why'd you marry her?*  
the chef describing
- 62 their son hearing  
two profs debating  
nature class  
private eye calling  
telling her pre-teen
- 63 With It
- 64 Uncle Harold  
grandkids dubbing (I)  
grandkids dubbing (II)  
asked to name  
golfer Conrad Hicks
- 65 pre-K child  
the wide, stout coach  
three Brooklyn sots  
the statistician  
questioning the priest

- 66 the upholsterer  
Maine lad assuming  
her three year-old  
fired teacher  
fired manicurist
- 67 Hiram Ira Quinn  
the obese man  
class president race (I)  
class president race (II)  
Gentile houseguest
- 68 insisting  
the dean acting  
pre-debate  
*What rhymes with toy?*  
redhead Tim Fawcett
- 69 Mr. Reliable
- 70 linguistics prof  
his wife describing  
the rabbi trying  
the novelist  
instead of numbers
- 71 bakery owner  
a third grader  
Aunt Glo regarding  
portraying (I)  
portraying (II)

- 72 telemarketer  
mid-winter blizzard  
the mentalist  
Great-Uncle Lou  
CIA agent
- 73 young Tess Strauss  
post-Christmas dinner  
chef Aldo Roma  
seeing the sign  
Alzheimer's ward
- 74 rotund Cousin Irv  
the old sailor  
optometrist  
orthopedist  
Granddad defining
- 75 bake sale (I)  
bake sale (II)  
on her résumé  
on his résumé  
film buff describing
- 76 Day of Atonement  
Aunt Miriam (I)  
Aunt Miriam (II)  
ophthalmologist  
police detective

- 77 the freshman asking  
*Have you a **real** job?*  
Uncle Sid describing  
Uncle Stu describing  
young Lee Gilbert
- 78 It Isn't Rocket Science
- 79 AC repairman  
career criminals  
teenaged boy asking  
losing at tennis  
the second grader
- 81 Author's Note

To Arrest Motion



*The aim of every artist is to arrest motion,  
which is life, by artificial means and hold  
it fixed so that a hundred years later, when  
a stranger looks at it, it moves again since  
it is life.*

*William Faulkner*



## Knowledgeable

In response to her young,  
unmarried, male co-worker  
who queried *Who on earth  
doesn't **love** the summer?*,  
The mother of four girls  
aged eight, six, five, and two  
considers the lack of structure,  
sunburns, sibling fights, rashes,  
splinters, insect bites, tantrums,  
bicycle mishaps, erratic sleep,  
mountains of dirty laundry,  
late-evening eating binges, and  
relentless complaints of boredom,  
And raises both hands

her second grader  
querying which is nicer:  
*loathe* or *detest*

the poker player  
describing an ante  
as *a pot grower*

the young doctor  
performing brain surgery  
as an earthquake strikes

Grandma asserting  
her most favorite word  
is *bouquet*

Grandpa asserting  
his most favorite word  
is *fricassee*

moving to Tucson,  
Boston's Hobart Pratt asking  
to be called Ho-P

three ex-cons  
christening their eatery  
*The Crepe Escape*

the eight year-old  
insisting his younger sibs  
call him *Sir*

the ten year-old  
insisting his younger sibs  
call him *Boss*

the twelve year-old  
insisting his younger sibs  
call him *Your Highness*

ESL student  
reading in class the words  
*A dove dove away*

ESL student  
reading in class the words  
*Farms produce produce*

prof candidate  
at Ohio State asking  
*Why Buckeyes?*

dean candidate  
at Virginia Tech asking  
*What's a Hokie?*

provost candidate  
at Saint Louis U. asking  
*Billikens? Really??*

movie director  
defining *refilm* as  
*do a double take*

the Boston Celtic  
noting his canine trio  
are *three-Pointers*

the attorney  
calling her small scent hound  
a *legal Beagle*

the pugilist  
dubbing his Molosser pups  
*amateur Boxers*

the IT tutor  
stating her yellow dogs  
are *computer Labs*

turning sixty-five,  
Elise Dershowitz hating  
her nickname, El-Der

turning ninety-eight,  
Augustus Toland loving  
his nickname, Gus-To

visiting Provo,  
a Brooklyn man assuming  
*Utes* are youngsters

a martial artist  
named Patrick Deaux christening  
his newborn, Jude

V.A. Hospital . . .  
three Nam vets in wheelchairs  
singing *Over There*

the chef describing  
ladles as *transferrers*  
*of stocks*

Trump hater choosing  
between watching CNN  
and remaining sane

*What's your religion? . . .*  
Aunt Rebecca responding  
*Reform Agnostic*

*What's your religion? . . .*  
Uncle Jacob responding  
*Neo-Freudian*

their fifteen year-old  
certain she'll grow up to be  
*That Weird Cat Lady*

a boy wondering  
if knights bought their bludgeons  
in hardware stores

a girl wondering  
if knights bought their armor  
in clothing stores

first grader requests  
an ice cream cone, not a cup:  
*It's eco-friendly*

poker champion  
expressing his morbid fear  
of going blind

*Make a wish, Ellie . . .*  
four-year-old birthday girl shouts  
*I want a new Sis!*

the mailman beams  
upon learning that his wife  
delivered their child

*More fruit, Jessica? . . .*

their young niece replying

*No thank you, I'll fart*

twisting her ankle  
in shul, Grandma muttering

*Jesus F Christ!*

boy with sarcoma  
detesting astrologers  
because of Cancer

fellow golfers  
judging his failure to warn  
as *uncalled fore*

learning to tell time,  
a child asks when will it be  
*next o'clock*

the farm worker  
regarding severance as  
*cabbage for canning*

first grader Lyn Knox  
expressing displeasure with  
knock-knock jokes

surf shop owner  
raising merchandise prices  
across the board

asked how he's feeling,  
the physics prof answering  
*I'm busy*

giving his sister  
four batteries with the note  
*Gift not included*

her granddaughter  
asking the waitress *May I*  
*borrow a straw?*

the smiling convict  
learning his thumb infection  
is called a *felon*

questioned how  
*hump* and *bump* differ, a child  
stating *First letter*

anti-vaxxers  
feeling they should be the ones  
calling the shots

pre-K imp Anna  
overhearing Gramps call her  
his *Annarchist*

the actress deeming  
her first-rate understudy  
*a standout stand-in*

*Your grounds for divorce? . . .*  
Aunt Meg telling her lawyer  
*Hatred of his guts*

Chicago rabbi  
hoping the Bears' Tarik Cohen  
is Jewish

Chicago rabbi  
praying Trump's Michael Cohen  
is not Jewish

horse farm . . .  
firemen learning the meaning  
of *facial blazes*

internet café . . .  
firemen learning the meaning  
of *flame trolling*

Nana regretting  
her decision to try out  
the *Slip'N Slide*

at her neighbor's door,  
three-year-old trick-or-treater  
screams *Happy Birthday!*

old couple choosing  
which one's less impaired to drive  
to the hospital

telling his student  
just because she's offended  
doesn't mean she's right

geography class . . .  
a New York boy asking why  
there are no *Old* states

ER nurse  
mishearing *retinal*  
as *rectal*

the geologist  
regarding ores as  
*miner concerns*

high school football . . .  
an anxious teen trying out  
for safety

pumpkin farmer  
believing the sweetest word  
is *autumnal*

her rich uncle  
presenting his wedding gift:  
a pizza stone

his wealthy aunt  
presenting her wedding gift:  
a melon baller

post *Brinks* truck crash . . .  
fistfights breaking out over  
flying C-notes

their immigrant Dad  
questioning whether harbors  
are *portly*

the proud elder  
presenting his granddaughters  
Grace, Hope, Faith, Lola

asked what *buoyant* means,  
the fourth grader responding  
*A child insect*

pre-teen porch pirate  
learning too late the gift box  
contained dumbbells

the meat cutters  
calling their neighborhood  
*the butcher block*

mid-eulogy . . .  
blasting her daredevil son  
for being thoughtless

## Follow Your Passion

After announcing to his folks

His desire to become

The conductor of an orchestra

When he grows up,

The nine year-old explains why:

*I like classical music,*

*I like getting all dressed up, and*

*I **love** bossing other people around*

young Mr. Booth  
cursing Mom for naming him  
Anatole

the prof describing  
an ode as *a grand tribute*  
*that might be urned*

Great-Gran  
confusing Martin & Lewis  
with Lewis & Clark

Great-Gramps  
confusing Marx & Engels  
with Funk & Wagnalls

after marrying  
Chris Martini, Pearl Dreyer  
opts to hyphenate

the woodworker  
regarding adages as  
*often used saws*

his young son asking  
why should you bother watching  
a game's first half

the referee  
defining the word *coma*  
as *a long time out*

her spouse refusing  
to set foot in a bookstore  
with no café

anagram lover  
describing *resist* as  
*twisted sister*

the chess champion  
explaining why he's the best:  
*I see more, faster*

MIT freshman  
contemplating changing  
his surname, Clowney

Great-Uncle Al trying  
to recall how *Cocoa Marsh*  
and *Bosco* differed

Great-Aunt Vi trying  
to recall how *Nesbitt's*  
and *Nehi* differed

upon Santa's lap,  
a six year-old requesting  
her parents split up

homophobe fuming . . .  
his daughter's fiancé  
is named Leslie

San Diego girl  
assuming Cleveland's region  
is the Middle East

shoved out of bounds,  
the Bears tight end sitting down  
on the Packers' bench

the lab scientist  
regarding his hot date as  
a chemistry test

rabbi's son dreaming  
of winning the Heisman  
leading Notre Dame

nine-year-old Dan  
complaining his name's too close  
to *dank, dang, damn*

explaining  
to his nephews the meaning  
of *misogyny*

the fifth grader  
asking Brad Foxx what's the point  
of the second  $x$

the sixth grader  
asking Beth Quinn why not spell  
her last name *kWIN*

parents claiming  
their toddler has two speeds:  
full throttle and sleep

his mother stating  
the term *criminal lawyer*  
is redundant

his father stating  
after attorneys die,  
they lie still

Elwood Anderson,  
known as Woody, nicknaming  
Elwood Jr., Chip

Cornell Kensington,  
known as Corny, nicknaming  
Cornell Jr., Flake

semi-deaf elder  
asking the nurse why she said  
he should gargole

after falling,  
Mom punching the man who asked  
*Have a nice trip?*

French I student  
pronouncing *beaucoup* with  
four syllables

a child suggesting  
the canine vet call herself  
*a dogtor*

fundamentalists  
wishing they'd remove *Idol*  
from Seacrest's show

three Southern ladies  
debating which one's drawl  
is more enchanting

a teen explaining  
to her beloved grandmother  
why queefs occur

the mirror maker  
fearing his shoddy work  
will reflect badly

*Want a side with that? . . .*  
diner's young guest replying  
*Yellow mustard*

*Want a side with that? . . .*  
diner's old guest replying  
*A dozen peas*

their son assuming  
reverse psychology means  
making your shrink cry



*We write to taste life twice,  
in the moment and in retrospect.*

*Anaïs Nin*



pondering why  
on the plastic surgeon's walls  
are Picasso prints

tense music teacher  
referring to himself as  
*very trebled*

his great-niece  
questioning whether Asia  
has a Middle West

mechanics claiming  
they fix their mistakes, but  
doctors bury theirs

a child querying  
the policeman how he'd cuff  
a one-armed man

IRS agent  
and his lawyer debating  
who is more hated

a juror noting  
neither attorney swore  
to tell the truth

Nana expounding  
why *easy* and *simple*  
aren't the same

*What's a chorus line? . . .*  
young musician responding  
*Tra la la*

parents, in-laws  
nearly coming to blows  
over toy guns

dubbing his wife  
who passes gas silently  
*a private tooter*

a child wondering  
is a surname what you're called  
once you've been knighted

their Dad regretting  
his Christmas gift to Mom  
of wrinkle cream

the math professor  
feeling he **must** buy the house  
on Euclid Drive

Easter morning . . .  
the rabbi telling his spouse  
*Good yontif*

retired car salesman  
noting his favorite orb  
is Mercury

GI specialist  
noting his favorite orb  
is Uranus

the wit defining  
as *diminishing returns*  
the word *echoes*

telling his grandson  
it's sinful not to eat fries  
on Fridays

mid-session . . .  
the old shrink realizing  
he couldn't care less

a little girl  
teaching an old woman how  
to use Excel

an old woman  
teaching a little girl how  
to play cat's cradle

Valentine's Day . . .  
doing last-minute shopping  
at the *Shell* Gas Mart

Pittsburgh teen  
refusing to see himself  
as a Northerner

Miami teen  
refusing to see herself  
as a Southerner

Jewish fast day . . .  
young David Katz requesting  
just one *Reese's Piece*

her child questioning  
why there aren't any cars  
named after Neptune

his brother-in-law  
calling their adopted son  
*unnatural*

the preacher noting  
Boaz, before he married,  
was *Ruthless*

Muslim boy dreaming  
of inventing the method  
to make pork halal

Knoxvillians  
wishing their demonym  
didn't sound evil

a Cubs fan in church  
hearing *In the beginning*  
as *In the big inning*

the manicurist  
describing an asp as  
*a Nile biter*

telling his coach  
*misunderestimated*  
is not a word

telling her coach  
*basic fundamentals*  
is repetitious

Sunday School student  
asking if the Phoenicians  
invented blinds

Sunday School student  
asking who was stronger:  
Moses or Jesus

Sunday School student  
asking if God watches us  
in the shower

Sunday School student  
asking what dinosaurs ate  
on Noah's ark

Sunday School student  
asking if the math's hard in  
the Book of Numbers

his Mom researching  
the number of calories  
in one *Skittle*

his Dad researching  
the number of calories  
in one mezcal worm

NFL coach  
noting his team leads the league  
in penalty yards

NBA coach . . .  
noting his team leads the league  
in groin injuries

the sailors calling  
their friend's obituary  
*dead reckoning*

a Catholic girl  
wishing her Jewish friend  
*a fun Yom Kippur*

her child demanding  
his snake be included in  
their Xmas card pic

Boston baseball fan  
fuming that a Georgian  
called him a Yankee

the trig teacher  
asserting his course covers  
all the angles

their nephew asking  
which is worst to eat: dirt,  
crow or humble pie

aghast Jews learning  
Wrigley's *GummiBursts* contain  
gelatin from swine

football fan's wife  
asking how many quarters  
does a game have

five-year-old houseguests  
blaming Gran's doll collection  
for their nightmares

geography quiz . . .  
high school student writing  
*Cumberbund Gap*

the preschooler  
confessing she loves cupcakes  
more than Jesus

recent convert  
displaying her license plates:  
*NOWISEE*

frozen drink vendor  
displaying his license plates:  
*NOWICEE*

trans-Atlantic flight . . .  
two loud, chatty morticians  
sitting beside her

sci-fi author  
describing UFOs as  
*foreign dishes*

superstar athlete  
hating the acronym for  
*Greatest Of All Time*

sixth grader asking  
if *buttocks* are one *keister*  
or two

post Super Bowl loss . . .  
Aunt Ethel taking a match  
to her lucky cap

post Super Bowl loss . . .  
Uncle Claude taking an ax  
to his lucky chair

*Your favorite films?* . . .  
her date responding *Scarface*  
and *My Fair Lady*

economics class . . .  
a poor teenager stating  
*I'll never use this*

hearing *big pitcher*,  
his son thinks *Clayton Kershaw*;  
his daughter, *rum punch*

hearing *right guard*,  
her Dad thinks *Marshal Yanda*;  
her Mom, *underarms*

demented elder,  
with arthritic hands, braiding  
a four year-old's hair

*Tums* user noting  
what his antacid spells  
backward

first session ends . . .  
the inpatient noticing  
her shrink is aroused

Civil War test . . .  
an eighth grader responding  
*Molasses S. Grant*

Civil War test . . .  
a ninth grader responding  
*Stonehenge Jackson*

a boy querying  
the vet whether they've tried  
seeing-eye cats

*Microsoft* coder  
shouting at his slow colleague,  
*Get with the program!*

NBA center  
referring to his team's guards  
as *Lilliputians*

eight-year-old cook  
calling bowtie noodles  
*dressy pasta*

one yard from the tape,  
the track star celebrating  
too soon

guy at the bar  
claiming he graduated  
from *Princeton State*

Margaret Legg,  
a surgeon, begging colleagues  
not to call her Peg

a child answering  
*What's the national bird?*  
with *Fried Chicken*

Queens tenth grader  
assuming Northwestern  
is in Seattle

Lubbock tenth grader  
wondering if Rhode Island  
has an *A&M*

new *Nestea* bottler  
asking if she's permitted  
a coffee break

the penitent  
noting that he is in  
a sorry state

their coach explaining  
when you're playing tennis,  
love conquers nothing

*Camry* salesman  
loving his car's anagram,  
*My car*

*Hasbro* salesman  
loathing his firm's anagram,  
*abhors*

*Do you exercise?* . . .  
bipolar prof responding  
*I run hot and cold*

*Do you exercise?* . . .  
overworked TA stating  
*I jump through hoops*

Sindi and Cyril  
introducing their three sons  
Kaleb, Klyde, and Klark

their second grader  
questioning if chess players  
wear sports jerseys

Bronx boy in London  
hearing *Ta-ta, Cheerio,*  
thinking of breakfast

urging his wife  
to cease terming her diet  
*my weight loss journey*

opting not to cash  
the gift check from Uncle Sy,  
a mob attorney

a six-year-old girl  
questioning the pharmacist  
if he sells chill pills

fast-talking coach  
claiming he invented  
the hurry-up offense

fifth grade student  
pondering which is whiter:  
*pasty* or *chalky*

sixth grade student  
pondering which is redder:  
a *blush* or a *flush*

Garden State newsman  
mishearing *The New Yorker*  
as *The Newarker*

the judge  
ordering unwisely  
at the food court

a tourist in Greece  
hoping to return to Maine  
with an accent

asking Aunt Louise  
why she says *Give us a kiss*  
when it's only her

tap dancing couple  
boasting to their friends  
how much they click

German teacher  
telling her pupils *ach*  
*is a Rhine whine*

the shrink raging  
his clients are making  
more money than he

*Coppertone* seller  
regarding an eclipse  
as sun block

his Grandma noting  
*If I had not gotten laid,*  
*you wouldn't be here*

Yom Kippur morning . . .  
Melvin Klein viewing himself  
as *Mel atonin'*

TV idol  
telling the rapt audience  
what makes her vomit

dog breeder  
calling money managers  
*asset hounds*

Oscar Oates asking  
his high school coach for jersey  
number 00

Zora Zhang asking  
her high school coach for jersey  
number 1

the brain surgeon  
defining the word *zoo* as  
*a hippo campus*

acupuncturist  
loving that her last name  
is Polk

the teen claiming  
her parents become enraged  
when she gets depressed



*You do not have to explain every single  
drop of water contained in a rain barrel.  
You have to explain one drop -- H<sub>2</sub>O.  
The reader will get it.*

*George Singleton*



Uncle Ike calling  
Aunt Merle's post-funeral meal  
*the after-party*

Great-Gramps believing  
his old, leaky paddleboat  
is the QE2

clueless lumberjack  
responding to the query  
with *I'm stumped*

Atlanta soldiers  
loving that their city is  
home of the Brave

*T-Mobile* rep  
describing prison time as  
*getting cell service*

their child musing  
whether Noah permitted  
termites on the ark

the nun calling  
her first ATM password  
*Original PIN*

sub-zero morning . . .  
a child plays the piano  
wearing mittens

colleagues describing  
the drunken French professor  
as *absinthe-minded*

young psychiatrist  
opening his practice in  
Nutley, New Jersey

the old man  
explaining why *winning*  
is not *succeeding*

the old woman  
noting why *reputation*  
is not *character*

skilled bunter  
proudly admitting  
*I'm no swinger*

his mother-in-law  
pronouncing the word *orgy*  
with a hard *g*

Judge Morris Lester  
urging friends to cease  
calling him Moe

post-chili . . .

airline pilot withstanding

turbulence

at the tavern . . .

the widower ordering

a *single malt*

at the tavern . . .

the pastor ordering

a *Vesper*

at the tavern . . .

the astronaut ordering

a *Corona*

at the tavern . . .

the chimney sweep ordering

an *Old Fashioned*

her ten year-old  
responding to *I love you*  
with a thumbs-up

her twelve year-old  
responding to *I love you*  
with a shrug

her fourteen year-old  
responding to *I love you*  
with a wince

*Why'd you marry her? . . .*  
semi-deaf man responding,  
*She talked real loud*

the chef describing  
beef jerky preparation  
as *cut and dry*

their son hearing  
*endometriosis*, asks  
*A Greek actor?*

two profs debating  
whether *Bud Light* or *Busch*  
tastes more like piss

nature class . . . a boy  
stating that *coniferous*  
means meat-eating

private eye calling  
his on-the-job jacket  
*the trail blazer*

telling her pre-teen  
he can look at nude women  
**only** in museums

## With It

The family matriarch  
Slowly shuffles over  
To her youngest nephew  
Points at his smartphone,  
And whispers  
*How about pointing  
Your gadget at us and  
Taking a selfish?*

Uncle Harold  
giving the homeless Bronx man  
a Euro coin

grandkids dubbing  
their ill-tempered patriarch  
*Grumpa*

grandkids dubbing  
their withholding matriarch  
*Nono*

asked to name  
a course with fruit, the painter  
replying *Art class*

golfer Conrad Hicks  
loving the *Times* headline,  
*Con Going Pro*

pre-K child  
calling 9-1-1, asking  
*What's 8+5?*

the wide, stout coach  
overhearing two players  
calling him *Couch*

three Brooklyn sots  
reminiscing about *Piels*,  
*Rheingold*, *Ballantine*

the statistician  
describing her husband Norm  
as *average*

questioning the priest  
how she should honor her Dad,  
a drug kingpin

the upholsterer  
defining *corrections*  
as *slip covers*

Maine lad assuming  
Central American folks  
speak Latin

her three year-old  
regarding the king's throne  
as *a high chair*

fired teacher  
believing he has been  
degraded

fired manicurist  
believing she has been  
defiled

Hiram Ira Quinn  
asking teachers to call him  
*Hi IQ*

the obese man  
referring to pet names  
as *love handles*

class president race . . .  
a fifth grade girl promising  
less homework

class president race . . .  
a fifth grade boy promising  
longer weekends

Gentile houseguest  
hunting through Levy's fridge  
for some pig meat

insisting  
her grandsons say *Pardon me*  
instead of *My bad*

the dean acting  
as if the prof's brain tumor  
were contagious

pre-debate . . . the pol  
raging that someone stole  
her footstool

*What rhymes with toy? . . .*  
Grandpa Sol answering *Goy*;  
Grandma Frieda, *Oy*

redhead Tim Fawcett  
praying not to be nicknamed  
Rusty

Mr. Reliable

Asked to buy groceries,

Her husband returns

One hour later solely

With Groucho Marx glasses,

Noses, eyebrows and mustaches

For their twin daughters

Aged eighteen months

linguistics prof  
arguing Duke should have  
a boxing team

his wife describing  
when she was heaviest as  
*my weight's height*

the rabbi trying  
not to hate his neighbor  
for buying a *Vette*

the novelist  
referring to garden hoes  
as *plot devices*

instead of numbers,  
a Ravens fan longing for  
Poe quotes on jerseys

bakery owner  
describing his eldest child  
as *gluten-free*

a third grader  
confusing ADHD  
with HDTV

Aunt Glo regarding  
the bucket of fried chicken  
as one serving

portraying  
her great-grandfather as  
*Huck Finn at ninety*

portraying  
his great-grandson as  
*Yoda at seven*

telemarketer  
with many fears complaining  
about her hang-ups

mid-winter blizzard . . .  
Boston boys watching their street  
becoming a slope

the mentalist  
describing ESP as  
*the sixth of five*

Great-Uncle Lou  
climbing the step ladder  
while holding his cane

CIA agent  
characterizing glands  
as *secretive*

young Tess Strauss  
noting her favorite word  
is *assesses*

post-Christmas dinner . . .  
Gramps teaching the youngsters how  
to cheat at blackjack

chef Aldo Roma  
preferring to be called  
*A. Roma*

seeing the sign  
*Van Accessible*, their child  
asks *Some guy's name?*

Alzheimer's ward . . .  
watching her beloved husband  
disappearing

rotund Cousin Irv,  
told *Get in shape!*, replying  
*Pears have shapes*

the old sailor  
viewing the SOS as  
*a help wanted sign*

optometrist  
naming her triplets Iris,  
Rod, Cornelia

orthopedist  
naming her twin daughters  
Pat, Ella

Granddad defining  
*as an overhead expense*  
the word *hat*

bake sale . . . math prof  
charging for one mini pie  
\$3.14

bake sale . . . French prof  
charging for three Napoleons  
\$18.04

on her résumé  
stating she played a juror  
on *Law and Order*

on his résumé  
stating he twice played a corpse  
on *NCIS*

film buff describing  
Ginger's partner Fred as  
*Astaire with steps*

Day of Atonement . . .  
the half-Jewish Turk  
drinking decaf

Aunt Miriam  
calling her son's daughters  
*the grandangels*

Aunt Miriam  
calling her daughter's sons  
*the four stooges*

ophthalmologist  
telling a child how pink eye  
and stink eye differ

police detective  
regarding matadors as  
*ones facing charges*

the freshman asking  
if the chess team requires  
a physical

*Have you a **real** job? . . .*  
her blind date answering  
*Define **real***

Uncle Sid describing  
one daughter as *ravishing*,  
the other as *cute*

Uncle Stu describing  
one grandson as *brilliant*,  
the other as *sly*

young Lee Gilbert  
loving French for making  
her last name sexy

## It Isn't Rocket Science

Asked why she never, ever  
Puts away clothes and shoes,  
Disposes trash, closes lids,  
Returns food to the fridge, or  
Cleans the messes she makes,  
Their five-year-old granddaughter  
Calmly replies *Can't . . . I'm lazy*

AC repairman,  
after a frustrating day,  
venting his anger

career criminals  
naming their newborn twins  
Cain and Ahab

teenaged boy asking  
which word is preferred:  
*crotchal* or *groinal*

losing at tennis,  
the attorney expressing  
contempt of court

the second grader  
wanting to bring Mom's breast pump  
to show-and-tell



## 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. *To Arrest Motion* is his fifty-eighth book.

