

SAVED BY IMAGINATION AND HUMOR

Poems by

Robert H. Deluty

Copyright © 2016 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 2016909692
ISBN 978-0-9904594-6-0

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

Printed in the United States of America

In memory of my parents
Elise and David Deluty

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)

Contents

- 1 *Quotation (Francis Bacon)*
- 3 in a bar
 the new retiree
 a boy explaining
 verbose CEO
 viewing porn
- 4 first session ends (I)
 first session ends (II)
 two days post-heist
 Nobel laureate
 mid-blizzard
- 5 Grandma requesting
 overhearing
 their two year-old
 his daughter
 Mafia hitman
- 6 the third grader
 from her car seat
 post-exam
 homeless old man
 death camp survivor

- 7 introverted child
 psychoanalyst
 worrying
 old prison guard
 initial session
- 8 Kansas City boy
 Cincinnati boy
 pizza slice in hand
 Aunt Margaret
 Uncle Bernard
- 9 voting booth
 Danish professor
 joining the chess club
 swearing she saw
 swearing he saw
- 10 Intro Psych student
 English Lit student
 a boy holding
 a girl holding
 in the hospice
- 11 bio prof Gwen Poole
 their son regretting
 the old woman
 Harvard grad's Dad
 MIT grad's Mom

- 12 first grader asking
calling the mixture
her child ponders why
Texans cheering
New Yorkers cursing
- 13 *Your favorite word?*
blaming the crash
the old navy cook
the six year-old
the twelve year-old
- 14 Isaac Rosenzweig
to honor Grandpa
her child explaining
the linguist
celebrating
- 15 Dad realizing
economist
actor
statistician
learning his in-laws
- 16 the chemist noting
Uncle Cy holding
mid-session
young Fred Rice
young Albert Joy

- 17 hearing-impaired boy
pre-op visit
homeless coke addict
Mom explaining why
Pop explaining why
- 18 at noon
the prof complaining
Jeanne Baum-Schell
pre tenth birthday
pre twelfth birthday
- 19 The Beginner
- 20 on his deathbed
on her deathbed
billionaire moving
honors student
doctoral student
- 21 a father (I)
a father (II)
Granddad's dementia
her toddler wanting
high school music class
- 22 *State Farm* agent
with Dutch grandkids
her spouse at the beach
college freshman
the three year-old

- 23 Grandpa announcing
watching the lady
observing the gent
threatened with a knife
Key to victory?
- 24 Yom Kippur morning
the artist calling
stoned stripper
an Iowa coach
a Kansas coach
- 25 Dad requesting
the maid of honor
bartender John Loeb
her spouse parading
asking the teller
- 26 Election Day
Carole King fan
Alec Guinness fan
Amy Poehler fan
Wes Anderson fan
- 27 Boulder bride and groom
San Diego Zoo
Ed and Joan Brenner
reminding himself
fearing

29 *Quotation (Dean Cavanagh)*

31 Aunt Mabel boasting
prohibited
singer June Hammer
after wedding
his sister-in-law

32 lunching with Turks
dining with Czechs
mortician Earl Phipps
wishing
mid-argument

33 mountain climber
obese Dr. Lee
visiting Norway
mid math exam
mid English exam

34 on Halloween
Aunt Carlotta
Uncle Curtis
the rebellious teens
a child wondering

35 anorectic Jew
7:00 p.m.
the five month-old
her physician
linguists playing

- 36 her psychologist
his psychiatrist
dying Marine
their six year-old
on his birthday
- 37 dental school dropout
their English teacher
dementia unit
waiting for Francis
post-arrest
- 38 hearing *Arthur Ashe*
students not knowing
Catholic child
New York four year-old
California man
- 39 Grandma pondering
Grandpa pondering
an anxious Jew
identical twins
How did she die?
- 40 cookware salesman
NRA member
calling the man
offered fresh bread (I)
offered fresh bread (II)

- 41 docile new patient
What's unclear?
her child describing
his child averring
two Anglo-Libyans
- 42 *Best painkiller?*
Passover, day 6
meditating chef
meditating prof
8:00 a.m.
- 43 an optimist
a pessimist
Great-Gramps describing
on safari
telling the bigot
- 44 visiting prof (I)
visiting prof (II)
Grandma signing
alone in her room
pregnant young woman
- 45 wiping a raw egg
middle school teacher
Halloween night
Bronx boy asking
gravely ill woman

- 46 wanting a sandwich
going to the store
post-sprint
post-vault
How are you doing?
- 47 masquerade party
nervous dentist
terrified surgeon
a child describing
her father
- 48 long-retired
gay wedding
the chef
the judge
Jon and Emma Derr
- 49 death-row inmate
post-TD
auto restorer
bride and six bridesmaids
before moving on
- 50 senile Aunt Bev
offended child
breast-feeding mother
their vegan neighbor
Dow researcher

- 51 his eight month-old
gambling baker
astronomy prof
French Lit prof
fashion model
- 52 condemned prisoner
post safety blitz
the biologist
Aunt Dora
Uncle Mal
- 53 TSA agent
informing
his Irish wolfhound
observing Abe Katz
U2 fan
- 55 *Quotation (George Carlin)*
- 57 smiling ear to ear
shaking with laughter
rafting doctor
Grandma observing
chainsaw killer
- 58 poet laureate
slam poetry star
struggling artist
old Texas sheriff
old Vermont judge

- 59 trying to convince
inpatient seeing
explaining
rich woman noting
forty-year-old man
- 60 Dubai parking lot
the prof wondering
a child assuming
Great-Gran explaining
Great-Gramps explaining
- 61 Bangkok child gasping
Warsaw child writhing
Tokyo child shrieking
dumping his girlfriend
dumping her boyfriend
- 62 Marxist professor
from a hospice bed (I)
from a hospice bed (II)
her great-grandchild
psychotic patient
- 63 elderly man
from under the sink
seventh grade teacher
MASH doctor smiling
Mom seeing herself

- 64 old Jews debating
the astronomer (I)
the astronomer (II)
the astronomer (III)
no-nonsense couple
- 65 Granddad assuring
the physician
NRA veep
post head shaving
post wig placement
- 66 A Rose by Any Other . . .
- 67 teaching subtraction
in a new *MINI*
the prof's four year-old
in Memphis
in Eugene
- 68 mistaking
post photo shoot
post screaming fit
Stanley Lester Steele
the elderly prof
- 69 a Yale applicant
a Tufts applicant
a Brown applicant
software engineer
asked to describe

70 the sergeant
ESL student
the obese elder
Great-Gramps teaching
young drug counselor

71 child with celiac
renaming his wife
renaming her spouse
uncovering
the priest

72 *You're worthless!*
I hate your guts!
*F**k you!*
post senior prom (I)
post senior prom (II)

73 flipping a coin
drawing straws
used car salesman
paving with tar
mining for coal

74 the prof preferring
first-time mall Santa
sailor pronouncing
the rabbi asking
mid-eulogy

- 75 Granddad discussing
soul singer calling
trying to fool
the groom vetoing
the bride vetoing
- 76 centenarian
first grade teacher
the prof refusing
a seven year-old
the tightrope walker
- 77 ninety-year-old twins
Yom Kippur (I)
Yom Kippur (II)
crossing the street
young entrepreneur
- 78 fourth grader stating
hating her mug shot
discovering (I)
discovering (II)
his wife responding
- 79 a Catholic girl
a Jewish boy
a masochist
a street person
newest great-grandchild
- 81 Author's Note

Saved by Imagination and Humor

*Imagination was given to man to compensate him
for what he is not; a sense of humor to console him
for what he is.*

Francis Bacon

in a bar, wishing
he could be as happy as
the folks in beer ads

the new retiree
responding to *What now?* with
Joining the circus

a boy explaining
why he **must** remove
all scabs

verbose CEO
hearing himself referred to
as Chairman Mouth

viewing porn,
the old dermatologist
staring at moles

first session ends . . .
asking her psychiatrist
for a loan

first session ends . . .
asking his psychologist
out for drinks

two days post-heist . . .
the old gangster noticing
a bullet wound

Nobel laureate
cursing the sixth grade teacher
who gave him a *B*

mid-blizzard . . .
drunk, housebound couple
eyeing cutlery

Grandma requesting
assistance logging into
the *Interwebs*

overhearing
the immigrant aesthetician
say *Eyeball waxing*

their two year-old
placing with care a *Band-Aid*
on the sidewalk crack

his daughter
equating quitting Twitter
with dying

Mafia hitman
describing gunfire as
chamber music

the third grader
expressing scorn that the *k*
is silent in *knife*

from her car seat,
asking Mommy to open
the *love compartment*

post-exam . . .
sending his prof the e-mail,
Did I fale?

homeless old man
trying hard to comprehend
fear of success

death camp survivor
trying hard to comprehend
bulimia

introverted child
wishing that Mom and Dad
hadn't named her *Star*

psychoanalyst
praising fear and depression:
My bread and butter

worrying
her new husband has
the seven-week itch

old prison guard
referring to the riot
as *just a stir stir*

initial session . . .
the old man asking the shrink
*How can I help **you**?*

Kansas City boy
guessing Queen Elizabeth
roots for the Royals

Cincinnati boy
betting Vladimir Putin
cheers for the Reds

pizza slice in hand,
collecting the dripping grease
in a glass below

Aunt Margaret
preferring *God-fearing*
to *religious*

Uncle Bernard
preferring *quirky*
to *batshit crazy*

voting booth . . .
the elder choosing among
crooks, schmucks, bigots

Danish professor
calling the Viking symbols
Norse code

joining the chess club,
a shy young woman hoping
to find a mate

swearing she saw
Prince Charles in Harlem
playing a steel drum

swearing he saw
Prince Philip in Central Park
noshing on a knish

Intro Psych student
referring to Sigmund Freud
as *that German twit*

English Lit student
describing William Shakespeare
as *full of himself*

a boy holding
a map of Austria,
seeking Sydney

a girl holding
a map of Idaho, stunned
to find Moscow

in the hospice,
Gramps whispering his last words:
But wait, there's more!

bio prof Gwen Poole
resisting the urge to name
her daughter, Jean

their son regretting
purchasing a Jack Russell
and a *Smart Fortwo*

the old woman
swearing she has never
passed gas audibly

Harvard grad's Dad
bemoaning her becoming
an activist

MIT grad's Mom
bemoaning his becoming
a shepherd

first grader asking
which is smarter: an ant
or a toaster

calling the mixture
of bourbon and Viagra
hard liquor

her child ponders why
dogs don't need toilet paper
after pooping

Texans cheering
the Bostonian wearing
a Ranger shirt

New Yorkers cursing
the Nashvillian sporting
a Yankee cap

Your favorite word? . . .

Great-Grandpa responding

Painless

blaming the crash

on the rear-view mirror used

when plucking nose hairs

the old Navy cook

referring to himself as

a seasoned salt

the six year-old

telling her shrink Mom and Dad

hate imperfection

the twelve year-old

telling his shrink Mom and Dad

fear limit-setting

Isaac Rosenzweig
presenting his adult sons
James Rose, Paul Ross

to honor Grandpa,
changing their surname from Finn
back to Finkelstein

her child explaining
why kale cannot compete
with green *Skittles*

the linguist
defining *are* as
modern art

celebrating
her new book's publication
with a **large** latte

Dad realizing
the foul odor he's smelling
was self-produced

economist
and therapist discussing
depression

actor
and therapist discussing
projection

statistician
and therapist discussing
regression

learning his in-laws
were calling him, in Chinese,
a hog-faced pinhead

the chemist noting
Jane Austen and Lambeau Field
have *hearts of gold*

Uncle Cy holding
a demolition derby
in his backyard

mid-session . . .
telling her counselor
eye contact hurts

young Fred Rice
asking classmates to stop
calling him *Fried*

young Albert Joy
begging classmates to stop
calling him *Almond*

hearing-impaired boy
treasuring the meaning
of *def*

pre-op visit . . .
asking the surgeon how much
she earns a year

homeless coke addict
stating he won *Powerball*
three years ago

Mom explaining why
she fired her psychologist:
He said I was wrong

Pop explaining why
he fired his psychologist:
She said I was nuts

at noon . . . correcting
the freshman who uttered
Good morning

the prof complaining
all of his meetings today
should've been e-mails

Jeanne Baum-Schell
deciding one day to dye
her hair blonde

pre tenth birthday . . .
their son requesting
a fanned Mohawk

pre twelfth birthday . . .
their daughter requesting
eyebrow extensions

The Beginner

Upon learning
that *one-of-a-kind*
means *unique, rare,*
and *extraordinary,*
a child draws
the conclusion that
it must be better than
three- or four-of-a-kind
when playing poker

on his deathbed
the baseball fan whispering
Going, going, gone

on her deathbed
the football fan whispering
Hail Mary

billionaire moving
to *mansion arrest* after
his brief prison stint

honors student
editing her thesis
at a Met game

doctoral student
proofreading his thesis
driving at midnight

a father
grinning upon noticing
his son's first hickey

a father
grimacing upon glimpsing
his daughter's first bra

Granddad's dementia
unnerving the teenagers
who adored him

her toddler wanting
exclusively baby dolls
with pacifiers

high school music class . . .
misunderstanding *Breathe*
from your diaphragm

State Farm agent
regarding Noah's ark
as flood insurance

with Dutch grandkids,
the Georgian calling herself
Instagramma

her spouse at the beach . . .
bald, hairy chest, beer belly,
and a red *Speedo*

college freshmen
acknowledging they've never
licked a postage stamp

the three year-old
referring to her vulva
as *my front tushy*

Grandpa announcing,
in his car, A/C involves
opening windows

watching the lady
in the *Yves Saint Laurent* dress
spitting out gum

observing the gent
in the *Brooks Brothers* suit
scratching his groin

threatened with a knife,
the storekeeper pulling out
a machete

Key to victory? . . .
the pro golfer responding
Get the lowest score

Yom Kippur morning . . .
non-observant Jews laugh, eat
behind their curtains

the artist calling
her river rapids sketch
whitewater drafting

stoned stripper
flashing the elderly judge
during sentencing

an Iowa coach
noting that *seeds* are teams
planted in brackets

a Kansas coach
referring to *roosts*
as *fowl poles*

Dad requesting
no funeral, fearing
a poor turnout

the maid of honor
choosing not to tell the bride
the groom hit on her

bartender John Loeb
christening his first child
Mickey

her spouse parading
around the house stark naked
but for clown shoes

asking the teller
for seven grand in
two-dollar bills

Election Day . . .
college students snapping
voting booth selfies

Carole King fan
enjoying her anagram
Genial Rock

Alec Guinness fan
adoring his anagram
Genuine Class

Amy Poehler fan
disliking her anagram
My Pale Hero

Wes Anderson fan
detesting his anagram
Renowned Ass

Boulder bride and groom
 offering their wedding guests
 an open weed bar

San Diego Zoo . . .
 gorilla, deaf two year-old
 playing peek-a-boo

Ed and Joan Brenner,
The King and I devotees,
 naming their son Ewell

reminding himself
 to tell each granddaughter
 she's his favorite

fearing, in heaven,
 his folks will greet him, saying
We're disappointed

*Both precious and absurd, this tightrope
of existence we walk in both directions;
strung only on a rhythm of heartbeats
across a void.*

Dean Cavanagh

Aunt Mabel boasting
her three-dollar flip-flops
have lasted twelve years

prohibited
from opening a junkyard,
scrapping their plans

singer June Hammer,
marrying Zach Stein, choosing
to hyphenate

after wedding
James Becker, Dawn Wood opting
not to hyphenate

his sister-in-law
eating the food on her plate
alphabetically

lunching with Turks,
trying to her best to enjoy
chopped sheep intestines

dining with Czechs,
trying his best to enjoy
fried carp sperm

mortician Earl Phipps
naming his child Ralph Isaac
for the monogram

wishing
her dour spouse hated himself
even more

mid-argument . . .
their son noting he prefers
to be ignorant

mountain climber
noting she's only happy
when aloft, alone

obese Dr. Lee
loathing that her first name
is Belle

visiting Norway,
forcing themselves to eat cheese
resembling ear wax

mid math exam . . .
the old high school teacher
checking stock quotes

mid English exam . . .
the young high school teacher
checking want ads

on Halloween
their three-day-old son sporting
a mustache, fright wig

Aunt Carlotta
explaining why she **needs**
eighty pairs of shoes

Uncle Curtis
explaining why he **needs**
nineteen wrenches

the rebellious teens
of two atheists choosing
to become Hasids

a child wondering
has anyone else noticed
Venus, penis rhyme

anorectic Jew
eagerly looking forward
to a fast day

7:00 p.m. . . .
the arriving night nurse
saying *Good morning*

the five month-old
preferring to suck the ring
of his paci

her physician
asking whether she prefers
pain or nausea

linguists playing
double solitaire, shouting
Oxymoronic!

her psychologist
agreeing she's much more fun
when sloshed

his psychiatrist
concurring with him
he's a douchebag

dying Marine
hoping to chat, in heaven,
with Napoleon

their six year-old
confusing *whack-a-mole*
with *guacamole*

on his birthday
the toddler wearing
a *Thug 4 Life* tee

dental school dropout
insisting that his daughter
not attend Colgate

their English teacher
defining the word *rind* as
a waste of good food

dementia unit . . .
the shrink's former patient,
a nurse, cleaning him

waiting for Francis,
a child in Philly holding
a Pope bobblehead

post-arrest . . .
the drunken sixty year-old
calling his Mom

hearing *Arthur Ashe*,
Adam Ant, Ansel Adams . . .
responding *Amen*

students not knowing
their foul-tempered teacher
has bone cancer

Catholic child
mistaking *inflammable*
for *infallible*

New York four year-old
assuming Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens
are oceans apart

California man
believing Berkeley, Fresno
are worlds apart

Grandma pondering
which she misses more:
sights or sounds

Grandpa pondering
which he misses more:
sex or memories

an anxious Jew
driving his car out-of-state
to eat pork chops

identical twins,
aged eighty-eight, arguing
who is prettier

How did she die? . . .
the coroner responding
Badly timed selfie

cookware salesman
in Stillwater, admiring
its state's shape

NRA member
in Orlando, revering
its state's shape

calling the man
who jilted her in Raleigh
an *Al-Tar Heel*

offered fresh bread,
the young street beggar asking
Any peach jam?

offered fresh bread,
the old street beggar sneering
I don't eat white

docile new patient,
in her therapist's restroom,
overdosing

What's unclear? . . .
the third grader replying
*Every f***in' thing*

her child describing
how brown and red *M&M's*
differ in taste

his child averring
that animal crackers
taste meaty

two Anglo-Libyans
calling their hops dryer
The Barbary Oast

Best painkiller? . . .

the pharmacist replying

My granddaughter

Passover, day 6 . . .

Gramps desperately craving

pumpernickel

meditating chef

whispering his mantra

Saturated fat

meditating prof

whispering her mantra

Youngest Nobel

8:00 a.m. . . . hearing

her boss say *Have a great day,*

she goes home

an optimist
named Alice O'Keefe loving
her initials

a pessimist
named Dale Oren Alt loathing
his initials

Great-Gramps describing
wounds that have been open
for seventy years

on safari
in Kenya, a Maine tourist
whistling *Jingle Bells*

telling the bigot
she doesn't know *who* he is,
only *what* he is

visiting prof
calling western New Yorkers
Buffaloons

visiting prof
calling mid-Marylanders
Baltimorons

Grandma signing
his sixth birthday card
Mrs. Frieda Ford

alone in her room
a sad three year-old kissing
her own boo-boo

pregnant young woman
in a long, tight, striped dress
creating op art

wiping a raw egg
off his rear bumper sticker,
All Lives Matter

middle school teacher
complementing the chef
on his coursework

Halloween night . . .
Great-Aunt Syl and her pug dressed
as a queen and king

Bronx boy asking
if their adopted baby
speaks Chinese

gravely ill woman
pondering how to say *Bye*
to her five year-old

wanting a sandwich,
the conductor considers
the *Subway* fare

going to the store
just to tell the cashier
he loves her voice

post-sprint . . . his coach
nicknaming Slobodan Molnar
Slo-Mo

post-vault . . . her coach
nicknaming Lois Barstow
Lo-Bar

How are you doing? . . .
their fourth grader responding
My life's a shambles

masquerade party . . .
her Goth cousin dressed
as Liberace

nervous dentist
performing a root canal
on her own uncle

terrified surgeon
performing a nose job
on his own aunt

a child describing
horses with no riders
as *empty*

her father
choosing to kill himself
once she gives birth

long-retired,
the prof believing he's on
sabbatical

gay wedding . . .
three grandparents suppressing
their true feelings

the chef, a Jets fan,
calling the appetizer
a first down

the judge, a Rams fan,
calling *But I'm innocent!*
a defensive line

Jon and Emma Derr,
both urologists, naming
their firstborn, Cathy

death-row inmate
 requesting for his last meal
Life cereal

post-TD . . . tailback
 rupturing two tendons
 celebrating

auto restorer
 insisting his employees
 sweat the details

bride and six bridesmaids
 posing in their Dior gowns,
 holding beer bottles

before moving on
 to *Macy's*, a young shopper
 tries *Target* practice

senile Aunt Bev
playing with her pet sticks
Woody and Fern

offended child . . .
his Dad calling him *selfless*,
but hearing *selfish*

breast-feeding mother
pummeling the low-life
who tried to mug her

their vegan neighbor
changing her last name from
Hunter to Farmer

Dow researcher
noting when old chemists die,
you just barium

his eight month-old
crawling toward the cactus,
her tongue sticking out

gambling baker
describing IOUs as
bread substitutes

astronomy prof
handing out on Halloween
Milky Ways

French Lit prof
dispensing on Halloween
3 Musketeers

fashion model
claiming her competitors
pose threats

condemned prisoner
telling his executioner
No hard feelings

post safety blitz . . .
the old QB dislodging
turf from his nostrils

the biologist
shouting at his young son
Evolve already!

Aunt Dora
avowing it's short for
Adorable

Uncle Mal
declaring it's short for
Malcontent

TSA agent
halting an elderly thug
with brass knuckles

informing
Mom and Dad that her boyfriend
is filter-less

his Irish wolfhound
whimpering and cowering
beside the Sphinx cat

observing Abe Katz
order a kosher frank wrapped
in cheese and bacon

U2 fan
noting that his efforts
are pro Bono

*Tell people there's an invisible man in the sky
who created the universe, and the vast majority
will believe you. Tell them the paint is wet,
and they have to touch it to be sure.*

George Carlin

smiling ear to ear
watching the college dean
drop his ice cream cone

shaking with laughter
watching the college provost
step on her sandwich

rafting doctor
referring to aortas
as inner tubes

Grandma observing
a teen heisting her car
as she fills its tires

chainsaw killer
confessing to the judge
Mistakes were made

poet laureate
noting his favorite form
is the limerick

slam poetry star
noting her favorite form
is the sonnet

struggling artist
deciding to change his name
from Hugh to Hue

old Texas sheriff
revealing his great love
for *Blazing Saddles*

old Vermont judge
revealing her deep hatred
of *Gone with the Wind*

trying to convince
his young son the mall's pet shop
is the city zoo

inpatient seeing
psychotherapist as
psycho the rapist

explaining
to their waitress the meaning
of cow tipping

rich woman noting
her closest confidantes
are all accountants

forty-year-old man
wishing he were not named
Taylor Swift

Dubai parking lot . . .
between two *Lamborghinis*,
a camel resting

the prof wondering
when *mischievous* acquired
a fourth syllable

a child assuming
being angry and *madness*
are synonymous

Great-Gran explaining
why she won't eat anything
she can't spell

Great-Gramps explaining
why he won't eat anything
labeled *nonfat*

Bangkok child gasping
watching her elders eating
fried tarantula

Warsaw child writhing
watching his elders eating
beef tongue head cheese

Tokyo child shrieking
watching her elders eating
tuna eyeballs

dumping his girlfriend
upon learning she loathed
The Matrix

dumping her boyfriend
upon learning he relished
Fifty Shades of Grey

Marxist professor
referring to exams as
class struggles

from a hospice bed,
screaming at the T.V.
*It's **not** ath-a-leet!*

from a hospice bed,
screaming at the nurse
*It's **not** sher-bert!*

her great-grandchild
asking whether she's older
than America

psychotic patient
noting *The voices are gone . . .*
but now I'm lonely

elderly man
terrorizing his Great Dane
by gargling

from under the sink,
the plumber stating he's at
her disposal

seventh grade teacher
reading a student's sentence
with three *however*s

MASH doctor smiling
while handing him bullet shards:
Here's your Purple Heart

Mom seeing herself
as a sports car treated
like a school bus

old Jews debating
which they hate more: Limburger
or Limbaugh

the astronomer
calling gourmet smoked salmon
superNova

the astronomer
viewing Chopin and Milosz
as *Pole stars*

the astronomer
referring to Marx and Mao
as *Red giants*

no-nonsense couple,
surnamed Leigh, christening
their first son, Frank

Granddad assuring
the children that money
can buy happiness

the physician
discovering skin cancer
in a skull tattoo

NRA veep
dreaming of grocery shelves
stocked with guns, ammo

post head shaving . . .
Gramps realizing he is
Elmer Fudd's double

post wig placement . . .
Gram realizing she is
Elton John's double

A Rose by Any Other . . .

The transgender teen
with the birth name *Angie*,
now referring to himself
as *Andy*, is called
by his Mom and Dad –
when annoyed or angry –
Andrew!

teaching subtraction . . .
the math tutor referring
to her *lessen plan*

in a new *MINI*
an old Santa Claus struggling
with his seatbelt

the prof's four year-old
beginning her monologue
with *Apparently*

in Memphis, spotting
the bumper sticker, *Honk*
If You Love Jesus

in Eugene, spotting
the bumper sticker, *Honk*
If You Are Jesus

mistaking
the prof's bad comb-over
for a yarmulke

post photo shoot . . .
the displeased surgeon
doctoring the pix

post screaming fit . . .
their two year-old complaining
she's *horsey*

Stanley Lester Steele
asking friends and colleagues
to call him Stan Les

the elderly prof
learning his first grad student
has dementia

a Yale applicant
sending reference letters
from four neighbors

a Tufts applicant
submitting a selfie
reading Tolstoy

a Brown applicant
writing that Christ believes
she's got what it takes

software engineer
calling her musty attic
a web site

asked to describe
something breathtaking, their child
responding *Asthma*

the sergeant
noting he does not possess
private parts

ESL student
confusing *strip mall*
with *strip club*

the obese elder
proclaiming *Twerk Queen*
on her sweatpants' seat

Great-Gramps teaching
twin seven year-olds how
to bluff at poker

young drug counselor
expressing shock his clients
are not truthful

child with celiac
asking which bottled waters
are gluten-free

renaming his wife
Mallory Evelyn Lenz,
Malevolence

renaming her spouse
Maurice Ronald Nichols,
Moronic

uncovering
in their preteen's closet
Yoo-hoo, Smirnoff

the priest
describing *Amen* as
a grace period

You're worthless! . . .

his therapist responding

I hear your pain

I hate your guts! . . .

her counselor answering

Thanks for sharing

*F**k you! . . .*

his shrink replying

Go on, please

post senior prom . . .

her son waking up

on a Ferris wheel

post senior prom . . .

her daughter waking up

in a police car

flipping a coin
when choosing to name their child
Karly or Carleigh

drawing straws
when choosing to name their child
Gail, Gael, Gale or Gayle

used car salesman
describing the Amish
as buggy people

paving with tar
in early August, humming
Whistle While You Work

mining for coal
in late December, singing
Over the Rainbow

the prof preferring
to call his twins Quinn and Ann
by their initials

first-time mall Santa
enduring a three year-old
peeing on his lap

sailor pronouncing
the *II* after his full name
Aye Aye

the rabbi asking
if medical cannabis
is strictly kosher

mid-eulogy . . .
the dead man's wife rising
to object

Granddad discussing
with the young mortician
exit strategies

soul singer calling
his vanilla and fruit shake
a Berry White

trying to fool
her dermatologist Dad
with red ink marks

the groom vetoing
the bride's wedding dance choice,
Better Be Good To Me

the bride vetoing
the groom's wedding dance choice,
Maneater

centenarian
explaining why stillness
and silence heal

first grade teacher
referring to *musical chairs*
as *Game of Thrones*

the prof refusing
to watch a football game
pre fourth quarter

a seven year-old
asking her priest if he's good
at keeping secrets

the tightrope walker
and his elderly parents
managing tension

ninety-year-old twins . . .
the older one still calling
the younger *Kid*

Yom Kippur, midday . . .
half-Jewish woman eating
a cheese blintz

Yom Kippur, midday . . .
quarter-Jewish man eating
ham on a bagel

crossing the street,
a deaf woman looking down
at her smartphone

young entrepreneur
opting to change his last name
from Workman to Rich

fourth grader stating
he wants to be a cowboy
or the pope

hating her mug shot,
a celeb sends the police
three cuter photos

discovering
the classical pianist
is named Elvis

discovering
the hard rock guitarist
is named Ludwig

his wife responding
to *How was the spa?* with
The mud's expensive

a Catholic girl
pondering whether it's worth
being a martyr

a Jewish boy
pondering whether it's worth
abstaining from shrimp

a masochist
deciding to breed
Whippets

a street person
trying to keep himself warm
burning Ayn Rand's books

newest great-grandchild
rubbing her fingers across
his Auschwitz tattoo

Author's Note

Dr. Robert H. Deluty is the Associate Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. He has been a psychology professor at UMBC since 1980, and 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 two granddaughters, Ava and Claire. 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. *Saved by Imagination and Humor* is his fifty-first book.

