

SAMPLER

*Municipal Love Poems*

ALSO BY SIMON SMITH

North Star

LEXICON

Night Shift

Juicy Fruit

Fifteen Exits

Reverdy Road

Mercury

London Bridge

Gravesend

11781 W. Sunset Boulevard

Half a dozen just like you

Navy

Salon Noir

More Flowers Than You Could Possibly Carry:

Selected Poems 1989–2012

some Municipal Love Poems

The Books of Catullus

DAY IN, DAY OUT

Simon Smith

*Municipal  
Love Poems*

SAMPLE

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*I am only satisfied if my spectators, shivering and shuddering,  
raise their hands or cover their eyes out of fear of ghosts  
and devils dashing towards them.'*

—Étienne-Gaspard Robert

*'We have all become people according to the measure in which  
we have loved people and have had occasion for loving.'*

—Boris Pasternak

For all those who were there along the way.

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# GENERAL PURPOSE LOVE POEMS

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## General Purpose Love Poem

this poem has passed the turn  
cornered where it could be  
a sonnet & twice as sweet

as fourteen pence of change  
as fourteen sous of change  
as fourteen bits all in a row

the fourteen lines of chance  
& the six degrees of knowing

on London streets  
along the boulevards of Paris

not an earthly  
art without a heaven  
not without chance

micrometer right  
to the exact fit

& not without dance  
Love is this logical

there's fun to be had out there  
there there & there

waiting for the freebee waiting  
for the end

of the barrel to settle  
& sneak a half

there's a fizz in the glass  
& the pleasure is mine  
& ideological

like a guitar with L|A|N|G|U|A|G|E printed all along the fret board

not a cloud a note to a chord  
to the mournful Doppler effect  
of a passing ambulance

& empty talk empties song

my love is like a red  
red rose after a skin full

a stretch from Tower Hill  
a shuffle to the 'Cheese'  
a cab to the Hole in the Wall

tonight the senses so light I could walk  
through a wall  
easy as that

phone emergency services phone

signal tied in knots  
signal held in knots  
calls held in queues

on the hop of Hope  
on the post-it of Hotel Apostrophe

on the orchid petals like labia  
see  
*that fits*

& flits  
no contact about the midriff

my one true love has disrupted the Time/Space continuum

sat on the Meridian  
knocked wonky

her hair like fish bones  
an earthly art beneath heaven

let's talk tax  
let's talk sex

let's talk oral  
let's talk talk

& walk  
beneath me behind you

a black hole  
to discourse

empty song empty talk  
webbed in the freedom to disobey  
grieving grievance since you're going

gone with  
Baudelaire to Cimetière du Montparnasse  
Rodefer to Père Lachaise

& her name on you  
her kiss on you  
healed

her overbite bitten  
you a bit down at heel  
victim's victim

leaning where others have leant  
leant money clothes words  
nettled

my reality a virtual reality near viral

they say Love is  
netted in the discourse of someone named Astrid

that goes down with the empties & empty laugh

down the Thames  
the insane Seine

& you need to watch your song  
like a hole in the Universe

I don't complete surveys  
or questionnaires or prize-winning draws  
or mind the shop

Prosecco that bright & foolish wine  
help ourselves to a second popping glass  
a crop a season a vintage

my data shadow my soul

this fruit light of Africa & the Middle East  
as more people walk away  
to shadows & grit

Love is ideological  
& swallows it all

down in one go  
as a serpent dislocates  
its jaw

in a theatre (Bataclan)  
in a café (Bonne Bière)  
in a bar (Le Carillon)

in a restaurant (La Belle Équipe)

the recoil  
to this trembling moment

out of time  
on the streets where love is possible

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# The Rhythm of Algorithms

blackbird on the squeaky fence  
Spring just round the corner  
I'm guessing

a fragment a flag a flying  
splinter

stop by the office about six  
when you could be home  
in what is said

of existing  
in the fact  
delight

is enough  
daffs in a vase  
bitten & burnt with age

or as I recall a sunrise 1968  
facing West  
dawn behind

between birth & death

as days sweep across the face of earth  
axes x to y

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## Picture Window

& all the houseflies have dropped  
well like flies  
surely a sign

this is the tip towards the end  
a husk  
with a lot hanging by it

or off of it  
the mind whirring out of control  
like broken clockwork

the veer from ballistic to balletic to ballast  
the lunge trip forward  
subject to Baudelaire's shock tactics

the sun behind standing at the corner  
with the poise of a hand  
poised over the door handle

exit or entry

the question goes begging  
with all the equipoise  
butterflies carry throughout their lives

for a taxidermy of past feelings  
like stuffed animals

signed off with a ballpoint  
my thumb planted firmly over the evidence  
there's to be no exception for others

politician parrot patriot or partisan  
no one knows who's in charge

or to own the answer  
like there is one

answer when there are answers

as we gather around another point  
in history change pins swop phone numbers  
exchange codes switch nations

of what remains

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