Playful Daffodils,
Or When All the Leaves Do Play:
Rediscovered Poems of David Joseph Marcou

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Front cover photos by David Joseph Marcou.
David Joseph Marcou is author of 70-plus personal books including this one, plus director-editor of 14 group anthologies, some of which have won significant awards. He graduated from the Universities of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Missouri, and reported from London and Seoul in the 1980s. His writings have been twice-nominated for Pulitzer Prizes (including for his play “Remembering Davy Crockett”), and his photo books twice-nominated for Pictures of the Year International Awards. His periodical publication-credits include in Smithsonian magazine, the RPS Journal, Business Korea, and the New York Times. His works are also in many libraries, galleries, museums, and archives globally, including in various Smithsonian Archives and the British National Portrait Gallery. David Joseph Marcou currently lives in the city of his birth and upbringing, La Crosse, WI.
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Dedicated to the memory of my dad, David A. Fitzgerald Marcou Jr.;
to my very vital mom, Rose C. Muskat Marcou; the Sim Family of Korea and America; Matthew A. Marcou, my son, and his wife, Jessica Amarnek, plus Matt and Jess’s progeny-to-be; Tom and Joy Marcou and their family; my other siblings and their families; and all of our friends around this old world called Earth, our home.

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Little Book

This is a little book
For me and mine.
If you’ve always wondered
How good a little book
Can be,
Then follow me further through these pages...
Filled with life, love, and serendipity...
And some nonsense too – poems all,
Of course, for me and you.

The Radio Guide

The Radio guide keeps me in touch
With all the in-date stuff I
Like to munch
Or crunch on a contemplative eve
In May
That is fine for me
And friends of Ray.

Dilettente

He came of age
In a desultory way
Looking to the mirror
As a thing to play
Upon a degenerate eve,
When friends set out to deceive.
The Playful Daffodil

The playful daffodil
Attends the morning reverie
With a frivolous disdain.
It has more on its mind
Than the deliberations of the ages.
It has spring and summer in its head,
And this is right and proper.
For without its sympathy for the
Lifeblood of the species,
There would be no respite from the rain,
Nor any larks for the bandy-legged boys
To play upon.

Prose Poem

The pinkest daffodil does not understand the solemnity of these warriors. They come into the land with faces unashamed and do their part to make the crocus bloom, but few give them the time of day. I do not know how or why a crocus blooms, but I do know these warriors are people I can do business with. They are stern about the passage out of this world. They know how to make it serve a cause and do not delay to die efficiently for that cause. I marvel at these men and women, and will not deny them their right to die as they do. I too have thought of dying in such a way, but have demurred. I think there will be other ways for me to serve the world, and my “deaths” will reproduce emblems for that.
The Crocus Bloomed

The crocus bloomed just the other day
Coming down from
Lacy way – his lady
Got away.
Infinite is the mind
Of man in the dawn,
Querulous its ways.

From dawn to dusk I labor so,
Making the world a place to grow.
Give me the time to reconnoiter things
And I will demonstrate my faith with
Debilitating rings of a bell I know well
And there to say it all full-well,
Via circumspect wagerings on the locust tree.

Taffy-Pull

John gave way for an instant in time,
And thought a moment on the fate of the nine.
One by one they die for such trust,
As the demonstrable dealings of the dust.
Come What May

Come what may the iris grows;  
It lingers not long for its wayward woes.  
Come what may the iris grows;  
It distinguishes not from desperate throws.  
Come what may the iris grows;  
It deliberates full-long on bureaucratic blows.

London Autumn

The countryside approaches the city  
With wind-swept leaves,  
Attaching to an interest in the vacation  
That is quite natural.  
As I gaze at the phenomenon,  
I cannot help but think that  
June is not too distant.  
Not so antagonistic,  
It is a good feeling  
That redounds to the glory  
Of that fine thing  
That discriminately colludes with spring.
The Alter-Ego

Myself caught up in the marvel
Of things to be seen,
Visions to be experienced,
Attends to the joy of simple things.
They are not wayward or forlorn.
They do not self-destruct.
I am obliged to feel a curiosity
About the complex world
They portend.
In the end, I discover things
As a vogayeur in a time machine —
Adrift for taut moments,
Entranced by the distinguished knowledge
Of eves prefigured and drawn in
To this splendid reinvention that
Has me thinking of why I was
Born, and the tremendous miracle of life
That I do not wish to escape.

Fever-Pitch

Two days ago
I was a refugee
Adrift in a whirlwind
Of uncertainty.
Today, I am making plans
For a future that does not berate
The intellectual quality of things,
Done or undone.
There will be a way to appease
The ghost of life past,
And I am only hoping that way
Portends the struggle to inform
The world’s population in ways
That illuminate the equal,
Eliminate the abysmal,
And control the spread of malice.

Civil Wisdom

I engage in discourse with people I meet
As a correspondent for the poor,
Making no gains without nominal pay,
And expecting no applause for
Gains I have not earned.
Perhaps I am the incorrigible sinner
Against the laws of vertigo,
But I cannot see myself
Except in the saner ways of things.
Tomorrow I begin a journey to the stars;
I hope The People are backing me,
For I have a long way to go
And few respites will dot the route.
Playful Action

Alive is my favorite lady;
She makes few lumps in her good gravy.
Today, I see her on a lark
Tomorrow, I hope we utilize the park.
If you ever tasted her gravy you would know
I come a long way to hoe her row.

Tenacious Men

Schenectady watched the men
With handcuffs on their wrists,
Digesting the signs
Of torment reviling...

Calm were the dewdrops
As Schenectady gazed on
Towards the heaven
That an earthworm smells
In the circumference of pity.

The Silence of Love I

The silence of love
Rings like a simple song
I once heard in the
Korean mountains:
White, pure, eloquent, rhapsodic.
The Silence of Love II

Amanda is not reflecting now on Mr. Kim.
Yet, she has never known a love quite so demanding.
It is great and pervasive,
And she treasures it whenever the cock crows.

The Silence of Love III

Daphne inspected his hair,
As the pure and simple shadings of the nightsong
Reeled off their mongrel charms.

The Silence of Love IV

A man came to stay today.
He had information in the Methodist way.
Why do we sin and why do we grieve?
There’s no understanding it, especially the reprieve.

The Silence of Love V

Amethyst were her covers
White was her way
The jingle goes on
Past Oksudong way.
The Silence of Love VI

Meryl looked to the stage  
With the temerity of rays.  
She reconnoitered it a while  
And detected a smile.  
It belonged to her beloved  
And thus came her resolve.

The Silence of Love VII

The telephone rang off the hook  
As Tracy curled her hair.  
Daphne sorted cards and sent  
A message to Jim.  

Upstairs the twins were playing marbles.  
I do not know what comes of insolence  
Except to say that it is better  
To occupy one's self with fiction  
Than to toy overlong with facts.

The Silence of Love VIII

The silence of love  
Whispers to me now  
Like a crisp autumn day  
When all the leaves do play.
The Silence of Love IX

(Icarus laments
The passing of youth...)

Three birds mime a flirtation
With inch-long thorns
Snapped without thought by dreamy wings
For the rain
From ancient girths.

The Silence of Love X

We all yearn to become
An unforgettable meaning.
I to you, you to me.

Elegy II

Show me.

Beneath the Pillow

Canceled truth gained
At the thought of death.
Moonlight dapples
The window edge.

In restless sleep,
A little boy recalls
The tenacity of the opposition.
Then, rolls over to a
Sleep of fever-imbued night.

The Tales of the Rice Bowl

Seeing this plain porcelain bowl,
The laundry hung on the line
In a tiny corner of my yard,
I know that I shall live unfolded forever.

The Silence of Love XX

Like Kim’s brother
Taken north during the war,
These clothes are strung out
Nevermore to return --
I am ready now
To have and to hold.

Stay with the Cuckoo

Stay with the cuckoo I hear
Stay with the cuckoo
And hear.
The Carrier of Ladders

The carrier of ladders
Stands in good stead with me,
As the wakeful buzzing
Of the bumblebee.

I recognize his first hunger
As the plains start
Beneath his trembling feet.

When I Was Seven

When I was seven, my thoughts revolved
Around Mike and Tom, my friends.
No more. Today there is
A crystal ship in the harbor, loaded
To the hilt with tons of chrome.
Perhaps one cannot say that snow is/was white
Until it is beaten into the mire
And trodden underfoot.
Nor is it as light as down always.
(Dec. 17, 1985)

Your Voice Is Silence

Your voice is silence
Your thoughts your own,
Until the coming of the stone.
(Dec. 17, 1985).
Untitled Haikus, Etc.

An old man slumps over.
It's 9:00 on the Strand.
Tea-cups are ablaze.

Encompassed by the din,
An earth-worm inches towards heaven
On a bath mat made on the Strand.

Trichinosis downed the man in blue
As he sat munching muffins
At 8:00 on the Strand.

The Strand was alive with commotion.
An old man had kicked a dog,
And the dog had fought back.

Croissants dipped in gravy.
An old man thinks to himself:
'Now, isn't that one pretty?'

Hades was ablaze with the news.
A fisherman dips down into the water.
Coal-flakes inch their way towards heaven.

Esmerelda charms the men
Who sit on the Strand.
An old man yawns contentedly.

Yes, an old man yawns contentedly
As Daisy sits visiting with
The salesman from Yonkers.

Green sleeves are worn well.
The young girl sits up with a start.
Diamond moves in for the kill.

Florence was a woman
Who set her watch by the nines,
Criticizing signs.

Green tea-cups remember
The lips that never saw beauty in eyes
Making love while at rest.

Sing-song sat up.
The trustee was clear, the moon blue.
Sing-song sat down.

Spring breeze:
The boatman chews his grass stem.
The gem in his pocket falls silent.

Art Hebberd

The glacier’s hue was
Frosty white on a reassuring
Day in May –
Which is why he looks
Good in London Fog.
So Long As It’s Re(a)d: Snow-bound

As I peer out into the winter landscape
A glimmer of hope is raised,
As I remember Mark and Mary.

There shall be a universal peace
For this time, if for no other.
But who’s to say what the emerald spires
That are created in snow shall mean?

Maybe more than this:
A Peace to last all days
Through all climes.

Today I dream of such things,
And these lines become open
To the spirit of all helpful beings.

Oh snowflakes, range out today
And say what only you can say:
Be fresh, be pure,
Be a being for all to know
And none to fear.

Snow-bound Again

The snow drifts are creeping in
On my life.
Today, I am 35 and adrift.
Tomorrow, I will be in Seoul.
Who knows if I will undergo this blizzard then.
Slow, slow, crinkly slow,
The snow empowers me to write.
(As does Snowball, Happy Snowman, and Happy Snowman’s Wife.)

The Mind’s Eye

The mind is a most peculiar thing.
From dawn to dusk it covers the din.
And when you expect it to play tricks on you,
It plays those tricks in a rigorous hue.
It must, for it conceives a world to see,
As the treasured emblem of the free.

The Poster

Gripping his broom with the heartiness
Of a 12-year-old kid wound up for the county fair,
Jim sets out to conquer worlds,
And does so, with a flair.

Incredulous

The diagonal retreat
Of a snowflake in a pool of water
Reminds of the retreat
One British soldier made
In Belfast recently –
Only to be cut down by
A sniper’s bullet.
Fair Game

The spoils of war go to
Those who already have plenty.
Little goes to the vanquished.
And yet I see a city rising
Out of the last moral debacle.
A city of rock and roll.
Who can there be to doubt this?

Shenanigans or Fair Game?

Ape-like he moves
Through a wayward jungle of discontent
His name might be London
If it was not for the death
That presupposed this poem.

Hodgkins

Every Sunday I see him
Mounting his horse to ride off
Into yet another English sunset.
He is never mentioned by name, of course,
But I know him just the same
And I like him very much.
**Repast**

The morsel before me is
dialectical, changing.
But even as I see it,
I recall a similar fate
That seems
Not dialectical, changing at all.
That day I was born
And it has been
Emblazoned upon my soul...
(As theirs has been on Matt and Jessica’s,
With more to come...)

**Detritus**

Kingsley was a man
Of most favored fate.
He met a woman
A wastrel to make.
And today they simmer
Because they cannot stew.
They remind of us,
Just me and you.

**Svengali**

Leo was his sign
A debatable sight,
Watching him go to the movies
On a cold winter’s night.
And now I believe
What they said was his due:
The stately lynx and
A precipitous kangaroo.

**Fortune**

Fortune is sad on this day in May
But I have my own with which to play.
And they are not sad.
Of course you should know --
Hermione lies about her age
In the snow.

What more can I give
This desultory mistress?
I'll think on it and
Be back in time.
The domain is large,
And it still is a friend of mine.

Come calling with me
And you shall see
The gifted lament
Of an old oaken tree.

(Thank you, Suk-Hee.)
Sobriety

Davy has his due:
A charade of spheres
Into which he played
Without the fishes.
Tomorrow he comes calling
And no idler will he be.
We’ll take him to
Peruse his favorite tree.

Samantha

Samantha was her name
And that should be enough
To gain some poetry
From this kind of stuff.

Wendell

Wilkie would be proud,
If he saw him now.
He is a contender,
With a precipitous bow.
Metamorphosis

December came calling,
A rare snow for thee
From which God be blessed –
One should elicit a tree.

Francis Gains Against the Tree

Francis was blessed
With a palm of desire,
And via his instrument
Came a fire.

The instrument was black
And emblazoned with a hue
That had us all out
In search of toodle-loo.

After Toodle-Loo

Dastardly night awakened me
Fomenting a miracle
Of tweedledum, of tweedledee.

Shanks from the calf
Glitter from the stove,
He’s peach-perfect now
With his untraceable drove.

Sally saw him first
And there was a flame
That could only be surfeited
By a bedeviling frame.

Of tweedledum, of tweedledee
Come forth for me now
You indomitable free.

Sanity

Perched on a limb,
With prevarication in sight,
He set out for lands
Of bedeviling delight.
And as I watch him now,
I unmoved but think:
To find him out
Would bring on no stink.

Serendipity

Remorse had me over
For a good night’s stay.
But in the morning,
Freed from her fate,
I was on my way.
Of Time and Complexity

The morning was cold and
Swift to say:
Be bedeviling and knowledgeable
And you will view the way.

Preconditions

Ann was her name,
And I was not allowed to debate
Within that marriage
The purpose of our fate.

Night-time

The sweet, simple sound of a nightingale
Disembowels the night with a favorite quail.
Tomorrow, he will be gone
And close to the morn
He chooses to warn
Of his curious fate:
The tremulous mission via-a-vis
The ingrate.
The Gloom

The gloom is
A doom
Of unsequestered state.
It plays on the fair-weather friend,
Like a precise magistrate.

Death and Deception

Death is not all deception --
If it could, it would set us free,
But where we go beyond it,
Depends on serendipity.

Cosmos

Nurturing the contentment
Of a hey-day that never ends,
I planetize my mind with
Bits of melancholy
To ward off the strategies
Of doom
And reconnect the universe
That twirls and spins
Within my brain.
Plums... and More Plums

The plums were hers,  
It has been shown.  
The pits were his,  
Let it be known.  
And unto this world, a child is born,  
The stuff of which this poem seems shorn.

Come Dear

“Come dear,” she said  
With nary a start.  
“Why so?” said I,  
The wayward fart.

Hiroshima Mon Amoure

You who have suffered  
Know that we love you.  
You who have suffered  
Know that we will not  
Allow this  
To happen again.  
You who have suffered  
Know that the crane  
Flies long distances  
For its shelter.  
You who have suffered  
Know that we will fly  
The same distances  
For you.
The Gifted One

The Gifted One said:
I have a hold over you.
The Gifted One said:
You have nothing to do with me.
The Gifted One said:
Praise be to Me
Who is your Superior.
The Gifted One said:
You have nothing on me.
The Gifted One said:
Do me a favor and lend
Me a twenty.
I said:
Pee on you, Oh Great,
Gifted One.
And close the door on
Your Way Out.

A Roach on a Wall

I spied a roach upon a wall;
Its look was dour, deep and small.
“Smack” said I, and smack it went
Into the cleavage of a roach half-pent
Up with rage at why I sent
Her soon scrambling for her broad-bent.
Achieve More/Fear Some

The peace and stillness
Reverberate around me.
And still I fail to see
What next year will be, 1985,
Whatever it will be,
I guess I will see.

My Friend

Who are my friends?
I think I know:
He and his wife are in the ranger patrol.
From here to there
I follow them.
They lead me away from the maddening din.
Today I am off my guard
For their fine sake:
No more am I on the make. (1985 & 2015)

Old Man – Old Woman

The two of them sat
Exchanging no glance.
Each knew their part –
A respite for dalliance.
But one was on guard
The other at play.
I guess that’s how it is
The old-fashioned way.
Heaven Sent Her

Heaven sent her on a crisp
Day in December – when the
Tubes stood their ground
And I broke my path.
Today, I am not alone.
Tomorrow I shall be the same. (12-7-85)

Summary Verdicts

Summary verdicts
Destroy the peace
That the uninitiated
Feel
Of a Sunday morning. (12-7-85)

Sojourns Silence

Sojourns silence
While away
The westward day
And reemerges
When
Time slips away. (12-7-85)
Fluidity Trade

Dalliance was her fame.
Herschel was his name.
Submerged in each other,
They reign. (12-7-85)

Tongue-tied

Constance nears the breach
With the character each-to-each.
As now can be ascertained,
The race is for fame. (12-7-85).

The Stillness

The stillness resounds
With the sounds of the Barbary Coast.
I cannot escape this
Yearning to roam. (12-9-85).

For Commiseration’s Sake

For commiseration’s sake,
He sank
A left hook into the cheek
Of Mel Torme. (12-7-85).
Dictates

All the silent misunderstandings
Rebuke me now,
Just as my son may rebuke me
Some day.
I am not alone, but am I
A man? (12-7-85)

These Same Things

These same things
Recount the parameters
Of these same things –
And you... (12-7-85)

Escarpment

Snowdrifts
Sustain the effect
Of quiescent self-respect. (12-7-85)

Epithets

Epithets of my youth
Come back to me now.
But how am I to see
The insistence upon my brow? (12-7-85)
After a time, each of us has the face that he or she deserves. After a time, each of us has the soul that he or she deserves.

**How Little I Know My Countrymen I**

On a bar stool in Toledo
Across from the depot,
Maggie saves her virginity.

**The Festival of Lights**

The warm December light
Illuminates my Christmas chapel
Along Twain’s Thames.
What more I see
Depends on them.

**Bells-a-Poppin’**

On and on, the bells are poppin’,
Ginger root and hell’s a stoppin’.
No more for me the cherished one,
Time for me to start to run!
Let’s Make a Deal with God

I have made a deal with God:  
Every time a bright bird flies  
To ferret out the facts,  
Let’s detect the lies.

How Dreamy He Looks

How dreamy he looks.  
Without a frown –  
Under his coat  
A frock of down.  
And over to see  
The meddling tree.  
Who is he now,  
One thinks to know,  
And runs the rhyme  
From to to fro?  
Tomorrow we gain  
An hour in time.  
No thanks to him,  
Who conspired against nines.

When Hope Was Raised

When “hope” was raised,  
I questioned not.  
When “faith” was raised,  
I questioned not.  
When “love” was raised,
I questioned not.
When “money” was raised,
I questioned “not”?

The Battle of Life

To fight, to dream, to slay illusions,
These are my way.
To drink, to sup, to imbibe delusions,
These are another way.
And it may be just as good.
To live, to die, to suppress no emotion truly
That is the way of demi-gods.

Inspired

Inspired for a moment
I saw myself
And it was not so bad as they had wished.
My forgiveness has overtaken me
And I am whole again
Thanks be to the gods.
They know the rightest ways to trod.

The Tracks of My Tears

The tracks of my tears
Eclipse the irregularity of my face
And save me from wishing
For a beauty that never ends.
The Pipes Sing, the Drums Play

The pipes sing;
The drums play;
Let us begin
A war today,
But then I will have had
Another’s way.

Compelling Witness

The birches arise
Out of the mist
To extrapolate the fears
Into an illumination of the
Soul.

From Berryman

Wherever I am,
Kind young sir,
Memory about me,
Wits-a-blazin’,
I’ll cope and make do.

How Little I Know My Countrymen II

And down along the avenue
Some guys were shootin’ pool.
They didn’t allow me in often,
But all I wanted to be was
One of the guys shootin’ pool,
Down along the avenue.

Oh, Veronica, What Do You Want with My Love?

She’s so fine
Wish she were mine.
She’s a soft-spoken woman.
Wish she were mine.
Doo·long, doo·long,
I’m gonna make her mine.
Gotta be mine.

Raison d’etre

I am a poet;
Golf’s not my game.
I practice my own with
A certain disdain.
Some may call it
A rueful accord
With nocturnal materials,
But hopefully not abhorred.

But I choose to call it
A lasting grace.
I persevere long
To give it a face.
And now that that
Face has been restored,
I practice the harder
To eclipse the abhorred.

**English Credence**

English credence is on my mind.
It is a quality difficult to define.
But it begins with a certain whim,
And ends with reasonability within.
English credence is on my mind,
A quality most difficult to define.

**Oh Godly Tree**

Oh Godly Tree, do me entwine
Who sits here beggardedly,
A man for all time,
And come around with your swift power,
So I may build my heavenly bower.
Tonight I want for you to rise
So that I may be always wise,
Waiting for a tug on my lapel
To signal me of how fond you feel
About my needs on this formerly dark day.
Tomorrow I breathe with you
In that especial way
That juggernauts alone know of:
Bereft of inconsequential dreams that climb above.
Keep me whole and I no doubt
Will grow your way, being right stout,
And there’s a beginning to it.
Beware

Snowflakes ascend
The waking stair.
A man stares back,
As if to beware.

The Rose

The rose enjoins us all
To pray for things
That will have their day.
And I do – I pray
For things that will
Have their way.
And that is my
Saving grace.

On the Virtues of Wild Flowers in a Jam Pot

Wild flowers in a jam pot
Remind us all of what it takes
To make the world a better place –
The little diligences that erase
The care on a weathered face,
The star-gazing that sits in
The warmer hue of a homely den.
When He Smiled

Paul D. sits inside these days,
Waiting for his illness to subside.
I abide.
I will wait for Paul
And his illness to subside,
So he will walk with Jeanne B.,
Smiling, side-by-side.

Crawling in to Sleep

Crawling in to sleep,
Without a peep,
Is for the leaf,
A dream too deep.
But it must keep
Making up its mind to rest there
Beyond the circumference of His stare.

The Waking Man’s Dream

The down-and-outer’s in a game;
The name of it is not for fame.
He struggles hard to earn a wage;
It’s strictly verboten on the incomes’ page.
I saw him standing on a wharf;
With his temerity he does dwarf
The countless fools who win a buck
Pursuing glory through self-destruct.
If he knew how much I care
About his feisty abstinence rare,
Perhaps we’d meet upon a street
Dotted with haloes, each to each. (Aug. 31, 1985)

Oh, Samantha

Oh, Samantha,
Your lips are so rare,
No difference between a peach
And a pear.
If I could but contain
The solace of our lost embrace,
I would self-efface
My love for Thee. (Sept. 2, 1985)

Let Power Attend Thee

Let power attend thee,
Sleep soft and sweetly,
All through the night.

The Ventura

The Ventura was a blessing
Along the way;
If I’d have known it then,
I’d have had my way.
You see it was a remarkable joy
To have the payments made,
And to know my neighbors
All by name,
In the national mise-en-scene
That characterized us then.
All time for sport and the
Fun-filled way of caring
For strangers who parted
The days.
But no more...

Now is the time when
Payments frequent
The daily round go-around
That has me full-bent.
Oh, Annie, for pay,
I'd have had my way.
Even if you did say
It's on its way.

No human ever protected
The love upon it I heaped.
And now to think of it,
My heart does weep.
Alas, today another car labors
In my heart.
If only it will do time
And regularly start.(1980s)

Landlords They Say...

Landlords they say are,
A most unsightly phenom,
Foaming for rents
And exacting their wage.
But mine is unsightly in
The sorriest way.
I never see him more
than on payment day. (1985)

Shrimp Boats

The shrimp boats do turn
Upon the bay,
Delighting my senses with
Thoughts of delay.
You are the migrant workforce
That uncovers the issue,
Reducing my brain to
Thoughts upon tissue.
That tissue is gray,
It is not blue,
And for thoughts like that, I
Resume on my nights to cheer
The masts of heavenly spheres.
Before this moment’s stay,
I never noticed the power on the bay.

Some Pithy Poem-Notes

A corpulent wave
Ascends the stair
It is oh so beware,
I have none of it,
And am gone.
Although the rabbit has
A most charming face,
It’s private life is
A total disgrace.

I know two things about the horse,
But one of them is very coarse.
And there’s an end on that.

The migrant wave ascends the stair,
On it depends a new world rare.
Today is but a moment in time,
Tomorrow the workings of things sublime.

Footnote for Jack London

Interminable hours
Reflect my disdain
Of the pain of
Suffering interminable
Dowagers (for hours).

The Burning of a Moth

The burning of a moth is
A Most unkindly affair,
Reflecting all the duress of
A most unsightly tear
From a world it negates
And the heat it upon gestates.
But for all its untowardliness,  
It is in no way so unfortunate  
As the love for a lost child  
Who would have had years to burn,  
Heavens to confirm.

How Fortunate Were We

How fortunate were we  
Who climbed the stair,  
A day ahead of the  
Time to beware.  
We came upon a treasured land  
Of timbers drifting in shifting sand.  
And tomorrow we will spy  
The Rains that will wither  
Our eyes.  
But for one thing oh we would  
Be so bright –  
The untowardly stepping upon  
Recalcitrant things that  
Go bump, bumpety-bump  
Into the night – that is,  
Of often-glowing together-nights.

South Korea

Oh land of the sledgehammer and the easel,  
Hear me.  
Now is the time for us to renew  
An old acquaintance.
For now is the time when I remember all and refrain –
From deliberating too long
Or castigating those miraculous whores
Who lifted my sights to you.
Give me yet another chance and
I will heal the old wounds and
Procrastinate no more in hopes of
Delivering ripeperfection to your feet.
O Korea, O Sweet, you are in me,
And I am in you.(1985)

As Old As It

The breast is full
Of an old fire.
Fuel of the hurt of an
Atrocity bedeviling.
At me they come
Without end.
I say now though
That I am ready.
Barrel full force,
You bastards!
And do your damdest!
I am ready at last.
And there’s a temporary end on it.

The Citadel

The Citadel has made all the difference in my life. I shall never forget it. It was quite superb, courageous and unadulterated. I believe in its good word. Let it be every man and woman’s word. (Aug. 25, 1985).
**Tone Poem**

The hearth  
Is round  
The soul  
Is mind  
A disservice  
Is time  
The body  
Is rich  
The spirit  
Is sound.

**To Sir with Love**

Sidney – the raiment  
Seemed aligned against you.  
But where were you  
When the chips  
Were counted?  
Why, at the head  
Of the stairs – or  
Should it be stars?  
Maybe that’s for someone  
Else to decide.  
You are beautiful and  
Black as the ace of spades.  
Hurrah for you, and many thanks!
A Simple Thought

God have mercy on such as we,
The indolent belaborers of the trinity.

Schenectady

From the East he arrived,
Passionate with the fame of
A deserted demise.

He was clever enough to know
When the fuel is well-spent
To extract from the undertow,
What Heaven has lent.

Today, he is a marvel of inventiveness.
Tomorrow, he will be a master of misdirect.
He is my man, of that I’m sure.
He can outwit the devil, with a ten-cent cure.

Maybe I Worry Too Much

I worried that baseballs curved
And cookie monsters didn’t.
That grownups talked
And children listened.
That shutters shut
And bath water glistened.
That my hair was too long
And my body too short.
That dogs moved
And cats mostly didn’t.
That bears were as fast
As ever I could be.
I worried about flowers
And that rainbows grew,
With almost no advice,
From me and you.

Mo: Bo

The shifting sands are time --
My offsprings’ hands are strong and fine.
Beautiful fawns grow, as do the flowers,
And I continue to go along my way... (1985 & 2015)

This booklet of poems – “Playful Daffodils, Or When All the Leaves Do Play -- was written by David Joseph Marcou about 30 years ago and revised only a bit by him in 2015 soon-after the “lost” first drafts were re-discovered. This booklet was first-published by DigiCOPY of La Crosse in July 2015.

David Joseph Marcou has been twice-nominated for Pulitzer Prizes for his writings and twice-nominated for Pictures of the Year International Awards for his photobooks. He graduated from three good Midwestern universities, and lived and worked in London and Seoul. He’s been published around the world often, and his works are housed in various archives of the Smithsonian, and in many other archives, too. His son, Matthew, and Matt’s wife, Jessica, live, study, and work on the US East Coast. David lives in western Wisconsin, where he was born and raised. He’s authored 87 books, including this one – among them is his only other book of poems, “Evolving Happiness”.