

## **Pessimism for Beginners**

When you're waiting for someone to e-mail,  
When you're waiting for someone to call –  
Young or old, gay or straight, male or female –  
Don't assume that they're busy, that's all.

Don't conclude that their letter went missing  
Or they must be away a while;  
Think instead that they're cursing and hissing –  
They've decided you're venal and vile,

That your eyes should be pecked by an eagle.  
Oh, to bash in your head with a stone!  
But since this is unfairly illegal  
They've no choice but to leave you alone.

Be they friend, parent sibling or lover  
Or your most stalwart colleague at work,  
Don't pursue them. You'll only discover  
That your once-irresistible quirk

Is not longer appealing. Far from it.  
Everything that you are and you do  
Makes them spatter their basin with vomit.  
They loathe Hitler and herpes and you.

Once you take this on board, life gets better.  
You give no one your hopes to destroy.  
The most cursory phone call or letter  
Makes you prickle your heart with joy.

It's so different from what you expected!  
They do not want to gouge out your eyes!  
You feel neither abused nor rejected –  
What a stunning and perfect surprise.

This approach I'm endorsing will net you  
A small portion of boundless delight.  
Keep believing the world's out to get you.  
Now and then you might not be proved right.

## Send

E-mail your lover one full-stop  
To let him know he's got the chop,  
The old heave-ho, the push, the sack.  
Period. Tiny, plump and black,  
And if a question mark comes back,

Rows of full-stops across his screen  
Will point out starkly what you mean:  
You loved him once. Now you do not.  
If he mistakes an awful lot  
Of full-stops for a dot dot dot,

Go bold, pump up the font, press hash  
(The one he made of things), then dash.  
For each new season's thriving crop  
Of travesties, each wound, each flop,  
E-mail your lover one full-stop.