

Poetry Series

Glen Kappy
- poems -

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Glen Kappy(June 30,1948)

To the Reader,

First, thank you for your time to read this. Below is information about me and my poetry which may help you better understand what I've posted here in Poemhunter.

About me. The three big loves of my life in the order they happened were sports, girls/women, and God. The earliest poem I can remember writing was to my first serious girlfriend. A few years later I met poet Ree Dragonette and started to focus on poetry. That was nearly fifty years ago, and because of a need to create, and the help of many people, I'm still at it today.

I was raised in inner city New York. My father was from Jewish background, my mother from Anglo-Protestant background, but both were alienated from their traditions. Agnostic themselves, they raised my siblings and me to make our own decisions about religion. Ironically, perhaps, from college on I grew increasingly drawn to "the God question" with my initial interest in the Hindu, Buddhist, and Tao traditions.

After completing my B.A., I spent much of the next two years out in nature. Over this time I became convinced there was an intelligence behind it. At age twenty-five and desperate to know God personally, I had an experience that led me to become a Christian. Now, more than forty years later and with significant change in between, I am associated with a local Mennonite community.

Early on I learned to think of nature as a teacher. These days as a walker in our neighborhood with lots of open space, and as the main gardener of the property around our home, I am brought into intimacy with it.

About my poetry. While Passing Through is the title for my collected poems. Under this they're organized by type or theme.

As they appear in Poemhunter, there are several poems with A Heart Song added to their titles. These were first written in my early years of getting to know God personally.

There are several with Prayer either in or added to the titles and are just what that word suggests.

There are several with A Home Pome added to their titles. These are about married and family life.

You'll find other collection titles in the text area with the poems themselves: Dreams and Visions, While Passing Through (short nature poems within my collected poems) , The Convenient Cat, Wonderful and Wise, and Remembering Kappy. With these the subject matter will be right before you.

Lastly, I want to express my appreciation for . I first became acquainted with it while searching for particular poems and poets. Then I realized I could post my own poems there. (I love the leveling in this!) The internet makes it easy to share poems with others, and how great it is to give and receive comments from people all over the world! For me one of the best things in literature is to identify with the experience of a writer. In its own way, then, is contributing to understanding in our world that badly needs it, besides being a resource for and promoter of poetry.

Updated June 2017

A College Memory

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

Her smile.

Ivy climbing up red stones.

Why this memory?

Glen Kappy

A Happy New Mexican

The air is hot and muggy—
the usual it ain't.
It follows last night's needed rain—
so this is no complaint.

Glen Kappy

A Leaf Leads

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

Ticking sound on street
takes me back from thought—
dry leaf tumbles ahead.

Glen Kappy

A Posterity?

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Hanging Red Bud pods—
wind before a thunderstorm—
off they fly!

Glen Kappy

A Single Desert Willow Or And We Worry God Will Not Provide

From winter trunk and boughs and branches
the water it takes
the powers to make
the countless leaves and flowers!

Glen Kappy

A Snatch Of Mariachi Music

A snatch of Mariachi music
summons tropical colors
of plants and clothes
the warmth and taste
of fresh tortillas
papaya with a squirt of lime
beaches and ocean
and swimming pools
the security of parents near
in Mexico in summer.

So even if the lead laments
it's still a song of daylight
of the comforts of outdoor cafes
a song that knows that sorrows too
must sometimes spice our lives
that laughter will again return
with food to fill our bellies
family and friends to share it with
and all there is to greet us
in the welcome world outside.

Glen Kappy

A Teensy Fly

from 'Wonderful and Wise'

While reading a poem
on my computer screen

a teensy fly
as weightless as a dust mote

wings which fluttered
at the slightest breath

for just a moment lit on it
before he lifted off again

and with him
my attention.

Glen Kappy

A Wonder

Closer to me
than my own skin—
your spirit, God
now dwells within!

Glen Kappy

Advice For The Morose

The mirror or the world
has made you feel morose?
Consider this advice—
then just don't get so close.

Glen Kappy

After A Summer Rain

Long it seems we waited—
clouds were piled high with promise
lightning, thunder, darkened skies—
but little moisture given.

Now this morning—early—
sky that's mostly overcast
the presence of the sun sensed only
in a few bright patches in the eastern sky—

now we walk—ourselves or with our dogs—
on sidewalks still with water stained
see puddles holding trees and sky
and rain beads thick on bushes we pass by...

We move in cool moist air
welcome it on necks and shoulders...
Everything about me seems subdued
by an unspoken deep-felt gratitude.

Glen Kappy

After All-Day Hike

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

After all-day hike
and campsite near

smoky shafts of sun
through stand of spruce—

O the lush colors
of gratitude!

Glen Kappy

After Night Of Troubling Sounds

After night of troubling sounds—
each a stab at our security—

you are the song of crickets, God
and you are dawn.

Glen Kappy

After Watching Woody Allen's Manhattan

In grayness of our lives
we seek infatuations—

the thrill, euphoria
like giddiness of champagne punch.

Our hearts are like concrete
and this makes rooting hard.

Unless the streets are broken up
it still remains a world of gray.

Glen Kappy

After Weekend Away

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

After Weekend Away

I drive last turn
before my street, my house— □
another life.

Glen Kappy

Aging As Ascent

from 'Dreams and Visions'

The larger view I get
in climbing towards the summit
has diminished early shames—
the lens of love
the only one that matters.

Beauty now—beauty everywhere! —
makes youth—with all its drama—
just one kind—
and one I gladly leave behind.

There's a hidden life inside
that's moving mostly
as does geologic time
but moving surely—
as the plates in crust unseen—

which makes me
feel and know
that dawn with light and color
always always follows.

Glen Kappy

Ailing Cat

from 'The Convenient Cat'

I let her lay
content on my lap
black fur rising, falling.

Glen Kappy

Albuquerque Scene

Three p.m.
Comanche bus in eastward climb.
Sprinkle of seniors, students, others.

Driver—hombre circa fifty.
Across from him, chica circa fourteen—
long dark hair in pony tail
perfect teeth, elegant neck.

It's supposed to be a duet
but she is shy.
So he sings alone in Spanish
quietly so riders in the back can't hear. □

His tender singing
her blushing smile
and all I paid was 75 cents.

Glen Kappy

All It Takes

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Just one strong gust
that made the elm bow low

now scattered on the ground
a riot of stems and branches.

Glen Kappy

And So It Goes

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Thunderstorm rain! hail! —
most of its blessing running
to the river.
Brimming rain barrel
a memory.

Glen Kappy

Another Glimpse Of Whitman

from 'Dreams and Visions'

I saw you, Walt, this morning
in the text of a speech by Dennis Kucinich—
saw you in his celebration of the humble
his exaltation of diversity
his call to live our highest ideals
and his repeated use
of 'we' and 'courage' and 'America.'

And I see you now as I walk this quiet park—
the delight I feel in grass that's patterned
by the summer sun and rich tree shade
in toddlers, brother and sister, who play in it
and in their dog with lolling tongue
a large and friendly fellow who from a distance
watches them and smiles.

Glen Kappy

Ants In My Kitchen

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Ants in my kitchen.
Sorry—I will not share
with them.

Glen Kappy

Any Way That We Can Move

The crow among the pigeons—
his awkward gait.

A friend whose walk is like the crow's
because of joint replacements.

My sister with her cane and her RA
but hiking on the difficult trail.

The neighbor with her walker now
I used to see with spaniels on their leashes.

Any way that we can move—a gift.
But O to mount with wings!

Glen Kappy

Aroused From Dream, A Home Pome

Aroused from dream
I wake to her right by me—
so near! so far!

Glen Kappy

As I Begin A Morning Walk

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

It's just cut grass I smell
but even so... even so...
how wonderful!

Glen Kappy

As I Pass These Trees

As I pass these trees
now lit by early sun
it's like a shutter lifted.

It's not like years ago
when they were merely backdrop
to that younger life I lived—
so forward-thrusting, self-absorbed.

No. Especially in moments such as this
I know I should not pass unless
I recognize their nurture, substance
size... and all that is their living-ness.

Glen Kappy

As I Read Your Words, A Prayer

To be accompanied by upright bass

As I read
your words
let them sink
deeper
than the regions
where I think
and settling
at my heart's
bottom

Let them
remain there
effervescing
upwards
bearing truth
in steady stream
to where
I think and do

Let your words
in my heart
continually abide
guiding me
as in one direction
they must lead
in you
and towards you

Glen Kappy

As I Walk By

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

One cicada burst
one mourning dove cry—
my ears were snoozing.

Glen Kappy

As Robins Greet The Dawn, A Heart Song

As robins greet the dawn
so would I greet you, O God.

As morning echoes with their fervent song
so would I sing in your presence.

When light appears and robins shout
they mean it.

Nearer, further, loud and long
it's the song of them dependent on it.

As robins greet the dawn
so would I thank and praise you.

Glen Kappy

As The Homely But Happy Music Of A Wooden Flute, A Heart Song

As the homely but happy music of a wooden flute
so let me be
but only let me play for thee.

I don't care to be in a dazzling symphony.
I'll be the simplest instrument
but only let me play for thee.

For when I think of thy greatness, God
then praises fill my being—
the desire and expectation of the ages
the Creator-God whose praises
the most distant and differing peoples
should join and sing.

As the homely but happy music of a wooden flute
so let me be
but only let me play for thee.

Glen Kappy

At 2 A.M.

from 'The Convenient Cat'

At 2 a.m.
nature against herself—

in me
to sleep and slumber

in my cat
to wake and wander

Glen Kappy

At A Grower's Market

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Last purchases in hand
I swing open my car door—
cantaloupe air!

Glen Kappy

At An All Souls' Service

They're in the eyes of others—
why not tears from me?

For kindness and for joy
the ducts flow freely—

for occasions such as this
the drops are none or stingy.

I have sobbed in grief with no control
but these events have happened rarely.

I search—is there a defect or a lack?
I am in this unto myself a mystery.

Glen Kappy

At Interment

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

Small boy proud—
all the pine cones he's piled
on a gravestone.

Glen Kappy

At The Threshold

from 'Dreams and Visions'

The world
is not some dreamland anymore.

Its glitter
like the bulbs of a marquee.

Its glamor
like the skin of a balloon.

Its pleasures
when I try to hold them

burst to nothing
on its hard, its sharp, its real.

Glen Kappy

At Twenty Years, A Home Pome

Proverbs 5: 18-19

We survived somehow
our early days
when you suppressed
your lush esthetic
and I kept passion
like a bobcat
in a narrow cage.

There were premonitions
of what might come
the days we were engaged—
the reclining nude in the print
you kept above your bed
that long drive to Paula's—
you so close beside me
in your mint-green leotard—
the lure of your neck
and plunge of your breasts,
the time we nearly broke
our vow to wait.

From our rocky start
and countless storms
we find ourselves
delivered now
to this fulfilling shore—
foamy fingers of grace
swirling at our feet
and all that greets us
hectic with possibilities.

Glen Kappy

August Afternoon

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

August afternoon
cicadas droning—
the sound of waiting.

Glen Kappy

Autumn Used To Tell

Autumn used to tell a sad tale—
for behind its beauty
the whisper of life fading—
after red and gold splendor
naked trees in cutting winds.

And civilization used to tell a sad tale—
the primitive beauty of lands
swallowed up by progress—
vigorous peoples declining
into bodily weakness and moral decay.

And my life itself used to tell a sad tale—
for beneath its pleasures
a melancholy undertone—
distractions gone
a sense of me in the world alone.

This takes me back
but this once was true—
they used to tell a sad tale.

Glen Kappy

Awake At 3 A.M.

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

I think
I'm starting to tell

one cricket
from another

Glen Kappy

Back In School Rooms

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Back in school rooms
just when the sun outside's
outdoing himself.

Glen Kappy

Because Of What You Have Done, A Heart Song

Because of what you have done
every dawn can be as this one—
as fresh, as clean, as full of expectancy and color.

I can look ahead without fear or wincing—
for you lift the lid, the cloudy oppression
from everything that comes my way.

I walk with you—
and you are my sun, my shield, my ever-shining companion
imparting comfort and warmth to all my days.

Thinking long and deeply of how I'm loved
I could tether myself to thought of you and dance round and round
drinking dawns reds and oranges and yellows and blues.

I could dance and spin till I plopped down
most thoroughly, most vibrantly, most happily drunk—
and all because of you.

Glen Kappy

Before Day's Heat

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

In gray light
before day's heat
rain beads on rose leaf.

Glen Kappy

Between The Lines

We don't hear or see the wind
but only its effects;
the spirit of the Writer
lies between the lines of text.

Glen Kappy

Bird On Wire

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

See that White Wing dove?
Even it has trouble
balancing on wire.

Glen Kappy

Birds At Dusk Singing

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Birds at dusk singing.
I heard a different tune
this morning.

Glen Kappy

Black Chin On Desert Willow

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Black Chin on
Desert Willow flower stem—
it hardly bends!

Glen Kappy

Both In Tandem

What to remember with what to forget—
both in tandem for a healthy mindset.

Glen Kappy

Branch And Gray Morning Air

from 'While Passing Through'/Winter

Knuckles knock the one.
Fingers pass through the other.
Is either more real?

Glen Kappy

Bridge

from 'Dreams and Visions'
to Gloria

In a dream last night
we met again.

Our younger selves
we walked a bridge
we talked
we kissed.

Near the middle
was a barrier
of slanted stripes
white and orange.

We stopped
and you began
to blame yourself
for my leaving you.

A young fool
was sitting there
and began to comment
but I stopped him—
then woke up.

No, I would have told you.
It was me.
You gave all you could—
heart mind limbs and womb.
But I wasn't fit yet
for fidelity.

So I write this poem
a bridge to you
wherever you may be.
This my owning up
and my apology.

Glen Kappy

Brief Exchange Between The Night Owl And The Early Bird

As the early bird
comes through the door—

"It's awfully bright out there! "

"Yes, it's morning after all."

Glen Kappy

Bright Beginnings

First day of school!
And kids in colors bright
and fabrics cool—
the clothing mostly
pressed or new—
dash across the green to meet
the chubby yellow bus
that ambles up the street.

Glen Kappy

By Or Through

Put 'by' or 'through'
before my name
and either word
would mean the same.

When I'm amazed
by what has come through me
I know, God, Who
the source must be.

Glen Kappy

Caged Beasts

Prologue to 'Wonderful and Wise'

The beasts
are locked
within their cages

One seems calm
another rages

Each one
yearns
to mount the stars

Burns
to reconcile the bars

Glen Kappy

Camper's Quandary

With thanks to Laurie Van Der Hart
for giving me this poem's start

He came awake with belly rumbling
then choices hard went through his head—
to rise in tent with trousers fumbling?
into the dark and maybe tumbling?
or greater risk to stay instead?

Glen Kappy

Camping Trip

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

In the cold and dark
a short distance from our tent—
relief... sky!

Glen Kappy

Cat In The Wee Hours

from 'The Convenient Cat'

He'll push on the door
and yowl bloody murder
and make you get out of your bed.

If you open up
he'll sashay in—
like there's not a care in his head!

Glen Kappy

Cedar Investigation

from 'The Convenient Cat'
2 Corinthians 2: 14-16

A recently delivered
cord of cedar
stacked in tidy pile
is now the scene
for our cat's sleuthing.

Less intensely curious
he circumspectly sniffs
at its perimeters.

Immersed in his investigation
he mounts atop
and hunkers nose
right down to red-meat log
even risking his coarse tongue
to splintery surface.

It's like spirit
but his cat brain seems not
to comprehend it.
What he knows
is that the fragrance—
which wafts abroad
in alluring arabesques
and spins his head
with sweet confusion—
does have its origin
somewhere in that wood.

Glen Kappy

Cherry Blossoms

The blossoms fall
and then the cherry.

Before resurrection
comes the bury.

Glen Kappy

Choices

from 'Wonderful and Wise'

Recalling yesterday
I choose the heat-lamp switch
for softer light—
and, yes, it's not just shadow
or a trick of predawn eyes—
but a cockroach in the sink!

I let down an edge of paper towel
hoping he will climb aboard
so I can shake him
to the ground outside
to his habitat of powdery dirt
and shafts of flexible green.

Who knows just what he sees
or how it feels
when insect feet try fibrous paper?
But he refuses
then tries again in vain
to scale the porcelain slope.

His choice for now—
to lurk through daylight
in the dank
beneath the stopper
and at night emerge
as from a manhole cover.

Glen Kappy

Climb

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

August sun rising.
In nook on quiet street
Morning Glories climb.

Glen Kappy

Clouds And Distances

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

The clouds today
make me think of distances—
and how earth itself
is just a dew drop
in the field of space.

Glen Kappy

Coming Up For Air

Like being under water
is my moving through a day's demands.
The moments I remember God
my coming up for air.

Glen Kappy

Couple

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Quiet dawn.
In silhouette on a wire
a mourning dove couple—
it looks like one
gently grooms the other.

Glen Kappy

Cross The Street

'... if a man or woman has received a gift from our Lord, such as devotion in prayer or in passion of Christ, or any other... let him not leave it too soon for anything else unless he truly feels a better one. ...then... that is the time for him to follow it and get it.'

Walter Hilton, *The Scale of Perfection*

I had to cross the street this morning
to feel the warmth on my back—
the sun is further north now.

My shadow stretched ahead of me
looking like a man on stilts.

Just yesterday I thought
already ten years past since Spain?
and six years since our granddaughter born?

The sun shall rule the day as always.
This morning I had to cross the street to feel it.

Glen Kappy

Crows

from 'While Passing Through'/Winter

Crows
in glossy formalwear—
scavengers still.

Glen Kappy

Dad And Daughter

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

In an empty lot
a waif of a girl—
straw-haired, pale—

smiles up
at a big man—
tattooed, tanned—

who scowls in concentration
over a rainbow silken kite
in his meaty hands.

Glen Kappy

Dawn Variations

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Murmur of birds.

I part the blinds to look—
not yet, not yet...

□

*

Between night and day
and a 'between' of my life
blue light seeps through blinds.

□

From my window—
dawn's pale light.
What will emerge?

□

In gray light
before day's heat—
rain beads on rose leaf.□

*

Sounds of crickets
then birds then traffic...
One Dawn.

Glen Kappy

Dawn Walk

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Dawn walk. Quiet—
where the piercing cries of hawks?
Dawn walk. Quiet...

Glen Kappy

Day In The Large Room

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Day. In the large room
small moth on picture window
draws all stillness to it.

Glen Kappy

Defense

For those who think me way too broad
this is my defense—
what does it mean to be "Christian";
if not human in the very best sense.

Glen Kappy

Desert Willow Silhouette

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Desert willow silhouette
in dawning sky—
wind moves, it moves.

Glen Kappy

Diamond Drink

Lit on grass
by rising sun
I think

This the beverage
that our world most needs
this our diamond drink.

Glen Kappy

Different With God

God, it's different
with my knowing you.

Into pre-dawn dark
it's natural that Orion seems familiar
instead of cold reminder of a void
that waits to swallow me at death.

No. Down and up my street
I walk for exercise
and take in sky and crickets' calming song—
it all feels comforting.

And when I return through iron gate
into my courtyard then unlock my door
I wonder can death hold any less
than what I find inside this house I like so well?

Glen Kappy

Dog Sniffs Intently

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Dog sniffs intently
round a spot of dirt—
what worlds we don't know!

Glen Kappy

Dolphin Dream

from 'Dreams and Visions'

I returned in dream
to New York City.
From my favorite view
in Brooklyn Heights
I looked through picture window

on lower Manhattan—
its buildings tiptoe tall
the sky above benevolent blue—
some few small puffy clouds
in its embrace.

In a little boat
I toured the harbor—
sunny as a Renoir painting—
and saw a man who leapt
from water like a dolphin!

I needed place to stay□
and there was Ken with minivan
and room for more!
We'd park somewhere
and sleep in van...

I woke and thought
'A man who leapt like dolphin?
Swim East River sludge?
Just park somewhere and sleep in van
in New York City! ? '

But the feeling of the dream
keeps on resurfacing—
like a pushed-down buoy then let up
like a smiling dolphin
leaping from its sunny waters.

Double Meaning

from 'The Convenient Cat'

The dog on other side of the fence
thought he had a firm grip
on the situation: every time he barked
the two cats apparently scared out of their wits
would high-tail it out of his way.

Until the day the dog managed
to cross that border of chain link
that separated them: the report is
he got himself so scratched and bit
he was mind and body permanently changed.

Glen Kappy

Dove On A Post

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Like me listening
to the Curvebill's call? —
dove on a fence post.

Glen Kappy

Dream Debut, A Home Pome

It was bound to happen—
my granddaughter Nova
appearing in my dreams.

In this one I tell her
of Superman lore
till nighttime
when we stand outside.

Her hoisted on to my left hip
others standing there besides
I get to point him out

first far away and small
trailing sparks like a comet
over building silhouettes

distant and tall
then closer, larger
till he flies right over(!)

two armfuls of muppet animals
secure in his embrace—
all very much alive(!)
a smile on every face.

Glen Kappy

Dream Familiar

from 'Dreams and Visions'

In my dream
I make the turn
before remembering
we have to go
around the fence—
the perimeter—
to reach
the lot and building.

I tell the one
beside me
as we enter
this a place
I used to work.

The street
wrong turn
the building—
I've seen it all
in dreams before.

I wake—
the remnants
of the dream
still with me—
and search my past
for analogs
like these
but nothing
I can find
resembles them.

So why
from where
the paths
the places
actions

feelings
so familiar
but only
in that life I live
in sleep?

Glen Kappy

Driving North When The Sun Rises Over The Mountains

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

In traffic
driving north
to work

sudden light! —
through my passenger window—
on the car just ahead—

and I glimpse—for a moment—
the world is good—
yes, the world is still good.

Glen Kappy

Dystopic

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Leaving the ball park
crowd on sidewalk walks trance-like
focused on cell phones.

Glen Kappy

Early October Morning

The leaves
still mostly
hang

and butterflies land
then upward fly
in curlicues.

Summer speaks
to the rigid calendar:
'I refuse! '

Glen Kappy

Enough

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

His wheelchair outside
older man head tilted up
smiles into the sun.

Glen Kappy

Exponential

Count them if you can.
Genesis 15: 5

Her dog
shivers himself

and lit by lamp
I see

the dog-hair shower
rain to floor below

tan and white and countless
on the carpet mostly black.

Common
as him
scratching

quick
as a flick
of an aphid from my sleeve

another
of God's daunting
exponential displays.

Glen Kappy

Faith Of A Feline

from 'The Convenient Cat'

Beneath wisteria—
its branches winter bare—
he waits on patient haunches.

No doubt he knows
his what and where
and will have lunches.

Glen Kappy

Fall's Charms

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

October morning—
crisper air, different light—
fall has its own charms.

Glen Kappy

Family Outing?

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Family outing? —
three snails inching on sidewalk
in one direction.

Glen Kappy

Fat Clouds, A Prayer

The fat clouds
are finally delivering
their promise—

their bloated paunches
dumping watery splats.

And trees
are dancing dithyrambics!
Flying green and wild flags!

And O
that it would not stop!

That tonight
the air, the streets
would be cool.

Glen Kappy

Five-Year-Old Granddaughter And Cat

from 'The Convenient Cat'

Hefted to her chest
he sprawls—struggles—against her.
She thinks she's helping.

Glen Kappy

For The Shelf

If the mind is a cupboard
put this on a shelf—
don't undervalue others
or overvalue yourself.

Glen Kappy

Forbidding Winter Night

from 'While Passing Through'/Winter

A cold wind
rattles the poplar

the full moon
in its branches

like a silver coin
in the hand of Judas.

Glen Kappy

Forecast

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

The sun
a memory
of tangerine mist.

The warmth of day
sucked up like a vacuum
into darkening autumn blue.

The wind
makes cold music
with a flagpole and its cable—

the ping ping ping
a forecast
to the bones.

Glen Kappy

Friday P.M. Reverie, A Home Pome

1

Home from work
he grabbed a drink and a banana
then forced himself to stay in bed.
His days had been like cars
in highway traffic jam—
bumper to bumper to all horizons
noise, exhaust both adding
to the numbing view.

But one of these days
their car would sprout up helicopter blades.
He'd push the button in the dash
and leave the tarmac far below.
He'd go to destinations far
and hover valleys lush and green
and romp with helium balloons set free
and honking geese.

And if he tired of that
do food drops and rescues
run the grannies to the bargains
hurl confetti where there
was cheering up to do
(then later suck it up
with the longest vacuum hose
so he wouldn't add to litter) .

2

All the bouquet does
the one beside their bed
is 'be there' looking pretty—
greens exploding from the crystal vase—
with fireworks of red and white
and purple and some yellow.

All it does
is be there looking pretty—
but it sucks up water

like a hundred straws—
to keep alive its beauty.

It's time for her to be bouquet.
It's time for her to drink
the waters that replenish beauty.
But where to put her? Where put him?
Is there a place where living
doesn't suck the juices from them?

3

From their room
with window to the west
from their bed he sees old sol—
his sinking to his rest
his blurring till he disappears—
then rose and salmon mist
before the blue that makes this Friday—
its impression—pleasant, sweet

like the TV moment after Jimmy D.—
The Shnozz— turned and walked
the path of lighted circles
on the ground, away
into the dark, then turned
to us his watchers
speaking gravelly and warm
'Good night, Mrs. Calabash
wherever you are.'

Glen Kappy

Fruit Fly Alone

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

Fruit fly—alone now—
hovering the counter
oozing plums had been.

Glen Kappy

Fruitfulness And Messes

When with fruitfulness the Creator blesses
should we resent the attendant messes?

Glen Kappy

Fur Puddle

from 'The Convenient Cat'

Thanks to Dick Austin
for the title.

He's one with carpet
before the blazing hearth stove
except for one tooth
that escapes his smiling mouth
on his upturned feline face.

Glen Kappy

God Is My Second Wind, A Heart Song

God is my second wind
the breath that gives me joy and determination
when others give up—and cry.

When troubles multiply
when they mount above the point of exasperation
I laugh—I laugh when I remember God.
For I am in him and he cannot be moved.
He is my father who cares
who has sleeves of inexhaustible resource.
I laugh and I seem insane.
I laugh but my reference is right.

Father, this is where I long to be—
shaken from introspection, drawn out beyond my skin, and emptied.
Perhaps too much would be too much?
But when I am forced from self-regard
then—ah then! —then I turn and look to all-sufficient you.

Glen Kappy

Grasshopper

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Grasshopper—big guy! —
he's still, I'm still, I stare...
till I see we're kin.

Glen Kappy

Gray Morning

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Heavier air
long green meadow—
white dog leaping.

Glen Kappy

Happy Daze

Is there a difference
between contentment and complacency?
Ignorance and innocence?

For me as well
the 50s gleam nostalgic—
as for a man who stands apart
from his suburban driveway
where his car just washed and waxed
is the focus of his admiration.

Then our would-be competition
in Europe and Japan
was wounded and limping
from that second war
and exports rushed from here
the paragon of modern.

Then our factories thrummed
and clouds that rose
from smokestacks
signalled progress and prosperity
and combine dust
our monoculture's triumph.

We were happier then
some studies show—
even as the smoke was choking us
even as the poison from our farms
was killing us and birds—
to which we were oblivious.

Glen Kappy

Happy New Mexicans Or Not In Indiana

Our barrels filled with last night's rain
the puddles and the concrete stain
the hiding of the daytime lamp
the feeling of the cool and damp—
because they are not usual
is why we can be grateful.

Glen Kappy

He Sang

'And when they had sung a hymn...'

—Mark 14: 26a

You sang, Lord(!)
In a tenor or a baritone?
(Another thing
we're left to wonder—
with hair, eyes, skin, size—
to wonder then let go) .
Was it a solemn song?
Or one to fortify
against the night
you knew would follow?

In times before
on dusty roads
were they who struggled
to keep up with you
surprised to hear you whistle?
Or did they smile
when you'd start
a cadenced song
to make less weary
all the miles?

Or in gray dawn
and back from prayer—
your clothing trundled up
as on your knees
you stoked the fire—
were the first to wake
who cinched their blankets
close against the chill
then warmed
to hear you humming?

As you were flesh
we know you ate
you drank, you did

what all our bodies
need to do.
To these is added
that you sang—
that we need more
than bread to live
was also true for you.

Glen Kappy

Heaven And The Five-Day Work Week

If heaven has its days
then all of them must be
like the end-of-work on Fridays
weekends stretching to infinity.

Glen Kappy

His Tuna?

from 'The Convenient Cat'

He heard the 'pop'
and at my ankles now—
hyper, frenzied—
he paces paws and paces
and up to counter paws again
to try and see the can
that made the sound.

It's only pinto beans
but in the universe that dizzies us
with all its births as it expands—
that mirrors what we see in seeds—
the schema of his galaxy
is summed up by
his wants and needs.

Glen Kappy

Homage To Renoir

For Claude
the shimmering light
on water and on flowers.

For you, Pierre
the light of life in human beings—
vivacity of women, men, and children
but especially the women
on the canvas that is life.

It is a beatific vision
O saint of palette, brush, and paint.
You make me bless the gift of sight.

Glen Kappy

How Do You Read The Sabbath?

As God's outrageous and imperious imposition?
Or saying, since I rested, you also have permission?

Glen Kappy

How Faint And Elusive

from 'Remembering Kappy'

How faint and elusive
is a breath

The eyes
that had been yours
fluttered

The open mouth—
with bridges gone
dried blood inside—
took in air—
needing two pulls in
to pass the throat obstruction

And then...
And then...
The eyes scrunched down
as in a newborn
about to cry—
but then relaxed

The hands
that had been yours—
that had been
frail and cold and active—
were still

How faint and elusive
is a breath

I remembered, Dad
our first cat
how we found him
in our backyard—
his mouth too
was open

I remembered
a cicada shell

I love you, Dad

Glen Kappy

Huge

Luke 5: 4-8

That huge haul
that boat-load of fish—
in itself—as a sum—
an enormity!

But then each one—
a silver tongue—
telling God's goodness
and mercy!

Under blessing such as this
my timbers groan.

Glen Kappy

Huge Dark Clouds

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Huge dark
paunches of clouds.
Little burp of thunder.

Glen Kappy

I Didn't Prune It

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

I saw a blanket flower
that looked dried out to me
but busy in its center
was a little wild bee.

Glen Kappy

I Lift My Eyes

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Tree trunk, limbs, and up
I trace the early sun—
I lift my eyes.

Glen Kappy

I Was Visited

from 'Dreams and Visions'

I was visited
in dream last night!

There was an older man—
a Studs Terkel type—
giving me advice
on a piece of writing
(which may have been my life)
and my dear Jewish dad—
who could be lifted
from depression by beauty
to rave like a love-drunk mystic—
my dad his sometime messenger.

Details? More details?
I'd give them
if I had them.
But as so often
in my dreams—
as with merchandise labels
with too much glue—
I have only torn these pieces.

But what really matters is
that into the Gotham City
of my life—
with its hard edges
and dizzying numbers
of window lights
and noise and traffic—
that from above
and into this—
I was visited.

Glen Kappy

Iconic Avenue

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Its mature trees
witness neglected houses
restored, landscaped—
perhaps this world
may yet live on.

Glen Kappy

Imagine Me

from 'Dreams and Visions'

Imagine me a happy idiot
a mellow-tempered man who's slow of wit
but content to sing homely songs
about all God's beautiful things—

a hobo clown
who lies in fields of daisies
and smiles kindly at those
who call him crazy.

But the world has a way
of pulling the passion from me—
its cry is enough to drive me insane
and only by an effort of my will—or is it grace? —
do I avoid shrillness, stridency.

O for world already changed—
no wicked plot
no man deranged
no sorrow to spot unending days
of beauty, joy, and praise.

It is not yet meant to be.
The world has glaring needs
and who can sit and bear it?
Give me courage, God, and zeal
that will not fail.
And keep my dream for eternity.

Glen Kappy

Impending Dawn

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Murmur of birds.

I part the blinds to look—
not yet, not yet...

Glen Kappy

Impersonating Shadows

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Impersonating shadows□

between the bushes—□

whiptail lizard.

Glen Kappy

Imprinting: The Birth Of Nova, A Home Pome

My wife had long been looking forward to this.
Me? —not so much, neutral. Then in an early hour
in the soft light of that living room I held her
my granddaughter, wrapped and small. Her tiny fingers
grasped my pinky(!) Ask me now how I feel.

Glen Kappy

In A Sound Studio Waiting Room

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

From somewhere unseen
in these narrow walls, stale air
a cricket sings.

Glen Kappy

In Spadeful Of Dirt

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

In spadeful of dirt
from ground I wanted to plant—
cutworm squirming.

Glen Kappy

In The Early Quiet Of A Residential Street

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Large dog poised
as a stranger approaches—
any... moment... now...

Glen Kappy

In The Moist Grass

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

In the moist grass
a lone tiny mushroom
its cap bowed down.

Glen Kappy

In The Time Before New Year

from 'Dreams and Visions'

Free of the usual—
what it requires
of my mind and body—

there are moments
in a state
that's in between

where I hover landscape
waiting dawn
to show its features

tread water strangely calm
until I see the way
to swim again.

And I can only hover, only tread—
for there is nothing I can do
no forcing of the future
my heart seeks.

Glen Kappy

In This

In this
I see
so much—

the toddler for her balance
reaching towards her mother's knee
and finding courage in that touch.

Glen Kappy

Inside A Senior Center

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

At rest on doormat
inside a senior center—
windblown leaves.

Glen Kappy

Is This All Beauty Is?

Another chore—
take down the foyer fixture
and change two bulbs.

As bug parts slide
from upturned glass to trash—
light on wing—iridescence!

Is this all beauty is?

Glen Kappy

Island Chain, A Home Pome

Last week
wisteria in waves
was flowing
from an overhang—
its scent intensely sweet.

Today
a fainter fragrance
with the flowers
that remain
dried up and hard to see.

Last week
I gladly sought the sun—
today I sought the shade.
And were those roses
so prolific now
on show at all last week?

So much of life—
ephemeral.
And so in more
than forty years
we've shared
the greater part
is like a sea
beneath the memories
more prominent.

And those
like islands in a chain
I fondly visit
one by one—
the sum both
a vacation tour
and private history.

Glen Kappy

Jogger And Her Dog

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Jogger. Dog on leash.
Feet—tap tap tap.
Tongue—wag wag wag.

Glen Kappy

Just 15th Street

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

It was just 15th Street
till liquid copper

spilled
from roofs

ran
down scroll and scallop

blessed
the window glass and sills

and flooded
blacktop, tires, feet.

Then darkness came as usual
to 15th Street.

Glen Kappy

Kitten Comes In

from 'The Convenient Cat'

Kitten comes in
and first thing
shakes herself
(collar tag tinkling)
as if to loosen
garment of cold night air
that clings.

Next nimble paws
seem to step
from garment—
filmy, unwholesome—
now almost visible
at her feet.

Then she walks away—
done.
So from dark thought
may I be done.

Glen Kappy

Last Day Of July

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Thanks to Daniel Brick

Last day of July.

5: 30 a.m.—still dark—
the light drains away!

Glen Kappy

Late July

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Late July—
a feeling of loss.
What more done?

Glen Kappy

Late Summer Morning

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

A chill in the air.
In my yard—a butterfly—
like a floating leaf.

Glen Kappy

Like A Coral Sea

Tree limbs lifted
make me think of praise.

The ones in downward slope
like arms and hands that greet me—

and not
through what may seem
like thin or empty air

but through a medium
of bangled light and swarming life
as in a vibrant coral sea.

Glen Kappy

Like Her Regal Cousins

from 'The Convenient Cat'

Our aging cat
who likes to be
in yard with us
goes by—
matted fur
on bony butt
then swaying tail.

On knees and hands
while pulling weeds
I watch her
make her way
toward iron gate
then squeeze
through bars.

I look if she will stop
to leave some buried treasure
in her favorite place.
But no.
She keeps on moving
with a slow
and predatory swagger
taller weeds
before her
bending left and right.

Glen Kappy

Like Sunday Streets

Like Sunday streets
for workday traffic—
so our souls for God.

Glen Kappy

Like This

from 'Wonderful and Wise'

A speck
of a spider

dangling
by the thinnest thread

swallowed in the volume
of an empty room

his ceiling anchor
far above

and almost lost
from sight.

Glen Kappy

Like Us

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Like us—warmed by sun—
long shadows on sunlit grass—
the trees in the park.

Glen Kappy

Like Window Shopping

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

The fragrance
of mimosa
from my neighbor's tree!
There to enjoy!
The freedom not to own!

Glen Kappy

Listening Prayer

from 'Prayers'

My ear
just like a pitcher plant

let me my urge to speak
fold back

and hold
in still abeyance

so that others' words
can enter in

then make
their slow descent

till text and subtext
are ingested wholly.

And even then
and even then

my words come slowly
if at all.

Glen Kappy

Listening To Genius Loves Company On Christmas Morning 2004

from 'Dreams and Visions'

Delighting in Ray and Bonnie's duet
I remember the rift in our nation
and think, The sides can meet
in this mixture of Country and Blues.

We need the breadth of Ray's repertoire.
We need to feel deep with his soul
the pain and joy of being human
deep past skin and ideologies□
deeper than DNA to spirit
where we all are awed and dumbstruck children
in this hard existence we call life.

We need to sing together
like Ray and Norah and Bonnie and Willie...
putting down shots or sipping wine
or wiping the foam from our mustaches or lips
or taking no drink at all, thank you—
laughing and kidding between sessions
where the focus is harmonizing together.

Strange that Ray and Ronald died the same time—
strange but maybe a sign.
In death with Bobby and Martin and Jack
back to original dust
perhaps they have a message for us
a message in the rhetoric of Thomas Jefferson
intoned again in a new March on Washington.

Glen Kappy

Losing Battle

from 'Wonderful and Wise'

I have pulled it, dug it, poisoned it
but never gotten rid of it.
A friend has told me of an herbicide
supposed to be effective
but I am doubtful
anything can work.

For if the apocalyptic bomb were dropped
that left the earth a desolate waste
what would I expect
first from sterile sands
but distinctive leaf and runner
of... Bermuda.

Glen Kappy

Loved By Light

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

O God, like the earth
loved by light in dawns, sunsets—
this how you see us?

Glen Kappy

Loving The Quiet

Mid-morning. Monday. College campus.
Spring semester done.
Few are here
with all its trees, bushes, flowers
besides the maintenance crew.
The walkers, cyclists, skateboarders
all but gone.

Right in the middle of a path
a turtle pauses.
And there! sunlight on his shell
another plodding through thick grass.
And in the grassy slopes around the pond
ducks and geese
can sun and preen untroubled.

Glen Kappy

Low-Flying Plane

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

A low-flying plane
just passed above the park—
here—there—small sounds.

Glen Kappy

Message From Beside A Sphinx, A Home Pome

from 'Dreams and Visions'

He lay his body down beside his geezer cat
his wizened yellow-orange sphinx
who hadn't felled a bird in ages
who embodied it appeared to him
the secret of contentment.
He envied his uncomplicated life—
a bit of food, some water
and a comfortable spot to sit his fur and bones.

The man was weary of the struggle—
his wife pursuing her degree and his two sons
and for income only him and feeling trapped
the house and yard that called for maintenance and more
the burden of his younger son—
the angers and the conflict
the calls from school and even the police.

He wanted out, to simply disappear, to dematerialize
without a fuss or leaving any trace of tragedy.
His wife could then collect his life insurance
which would keep her for a while
and she and his two sons could get on with their lives.

He wondered next to sphinx
again beside him after purring advances then rejections
wondered why he'd been abandoned to this trudging life
eight years trudging with no end in sight
wondered what was meant by losing life to gain it

when something—like a stick that's struck to stagnant water—
sent ripples—and when the surface settled
there was this reflection—
One does not live to oneself.
One does not live to oneself.

The younger son came in to ask him for a ride.
He grabbed his shirt, keys, wallet, and put his sandals on.

Glen Kappy

Miles

In the pool hall
Miles seemed at home.
Beneath the low-hung lamps
he'd line his shots
and move around the tables
with a husky grace.
Nail-bitten pudgy fingers
steady on green felt
he'd stroke the stick—
then click click click—
in our circle he was best.

At the beach
beneath the head we knew—
roundish face and buzz-cut hair
the angle chip in one front tooth—
we saw the whitest body—
skin that only pinked
when tan was what we wanted—
no muscle tone
and type of walk
that lumbered side to side.
Most of us
with clothing shed
around the girls
had self-perceived deficiencies
and somehow Miles
had a knowing
that could pick these out
which he'd expose
in ridicule.

Miles was the champ
at chugging beer
the first or nearly first
to drink down Robitussin
sniff glue try pot
and pop barbiturates.
It was sometime later

that I heard that Miles—
loud and laughing Miles
pool champ and a nemesis—
had died by heroin o.d.

Glen Kappy

Mindscape

As I emerge from work
the view reflects my mood.

The shifting clouds obscure the sun.
The wind is cutting
like the speech from management I heard today—
it shakes the leaves and branches.

To the east are clouds
like stuff from wooly aphids
clinging to the mountain ridge
and to my consciousness.

Glen Kappy

Monsoon Tarries

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

The monsoon tarries—
I scan the sky, the clouds—
I'm praying again.

Glen Kappy

Morning Sun Dances

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Morning sun
dances in branches.
Birds sing.

Glen Kappy

Morning Walk With Woodpecker

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Rapid staccato
echoing in chill air
brings me back.

Glen Kappy

Mortality

After ringing and ringing
I use my key to enter his apartment
thinking he is gone or napping.

But there he is
through open bathroom door
engrossed in shaving

as one who thinks he is alone—
whose ears made deaf by accident and age
make more alone.

No pants or underpants!
But why would it matter—
just him with his face in the mirror?

Which is why I quietly put down
the things I brought
and back out through the door.

Glen Kappy

Moth Plague□

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

As I reach
for kitchen cabinet door—
muffled flicking.

Glen Kappy

Mr. And Mrs. Sprat Abed In Early Fall, A Home Pome

She throws off covers
turns on fan to cool off.
Chilled, he burrows down.

Glen Kappy

Muddy Lot

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Muddy lot
scarred by tire tracks—
blue sky in trough!

Glen Kappy

Mulberry Tree

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Walking beneath one—
the sidewalk purpled
by berries crushed—
I see why some
choose fruitlessness.

Glen Kappy

My Eye Must Take Second Place, A Heart Song

My eye must take second place.
It must take second place and be confounded.

For thick and suffocating darkness
is nothing to fear.

And the sight of vast uninhabited space
does not negate the God who is there.

And though the future seem barren of promise
still that stone must yield.

Sickness, hunger, thirst—
an eye-ful and mindful of affliction—
cannot prevent the glory that lies beyond the veil.

My eye will and will always—
but you have promised you will never never
forsake me nor—fail.

Glen Kappy

My Sixty-Eight-Year-Old Self Looks In The Mirror

I study my face in the mirror.
The couple I met yesterday—
first time in years—

agreed I was "looking good."
Did they mean it? ...
What did they see?

Glen Kappy

Nature And Man

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

She graces his barren yard
with a Mexican Bird of Paradise.

He squirts its sprout
with herbicide.

Glen Kappy

Navel Orange

from 'While Passing Through'/Winter

Navel orange.

I bite, gouge, tear it—
and it gives fragrance.

Glen Kappy

Neighbor's Forsythia

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Neighbor's forsythia—
blossoms mostly withered—
where have I been looking?

Glen Kappy

New Mexico Sunflowers

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Summer's closing days.
New Mexico Sunflowers
heavy with blossoms
recline in place
bathe in the sun.

Glen Kappy

News

This I care about—
my granddaughter's latest
about her bunnies.

Glen Kappy

Not Autumn

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Not autumn yet—
this why the sentinel crow
"caws" from his post?

Glen Kappy

Not In Indiana Or A New Mexican Confesses

The man confesses
after days
of overcast and rain:

"I feel guilty to say it
but I'm glad
to see the sun again."

Glen Kappy

Not Whole

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Not a whole one—
the cigarette he's puffing—
the homeless man.

Glen Kappy

Nothing Ordinary

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Lighting by the sun
no doubt about it—
this tree is a star!

*

Landscape river rocks
their shadows in morning light—
any ol' stones?

Glen Kappy

November Gusts 2016

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

Who wants out in this? —
the thrashing, dust, chill... But it
does have purpose, yes?

Glen Kappy

Nudists

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

At the river
we drop our clothes then □
hide beneath our skins.

Glen Kappy

O Moon

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

O moon, detached, cool—
high above the heat this day
while I am struggling—
I'm glad that God
is not like you.

Glen Kappy

Ocotillo

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

In winter this one looks so dead.
Then spring(!) with bunches brilliant red.

Glen Kappy

Of Bees And Mexican Hats

Bees—so many! —
buzzing about the flowers
we call Mexican Hats.

What might they mirror
of invisible worlds?

Ions and their attractions?
Or angels perhaps? —

visiting our heads
with hints and intuitions
even as we claim them
as our own.

Glen Kappy

Offerings

The earth
dampened to dark brown.

The grass
that grows up from it—
a wonderful green
a golden green—

(I'd say like emerald
or green garnet
if they were living
or as wholesome.)

Beneath our feet
both firm and giving
it supports us.
Coolness rises from it.

What do we really need?
How much do we really need?

Glen Kappy

On A Rare And Splendid Morning

from 'Dreams and Visions'

Beneath the vast transparent blue
and by or under trees replete
with leaves and echoing birds
we walk with senses tuned
to the uplifting sounds
the out and in of shade
the perfect match of warm and cool.

We're walking near to homes
and in a neighborhood
we tend to call our own
but far or farther from our cares
in this surrounding glory—
even if or as we glimpse
we're visitors just passing through.

Glen Kappy

On A Residential City Sidewalk

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

A sun-drenched spring day.
Girl on a pink bicycle
pedals out of sight.

Glen Kappy

On A Silent Retreat

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Just beyond
these walls—
passing traffic.

Glen Kappy

On My Education As A Poet: The Sound Of Language

Her name I don't remember.
Our English teacher for a while
she was slim and tall
and blonde and freckled
and with features overall
that made my eighth grade self
inclined to pay attention.

And her way of speaking—
honey somewhat thickened
and with Southern flavor
flowing from her mouth—
a contrast to the words
that pushed against each other
in a crowded line—
our New York City speech.

And this one day I heard
each syllable savored slowly
as she spoke—'garbage'—
followed by her question—
'isn't that a beautiful word? '

Glen Kappy

On My Education As A Poet: The Usefulness Of Rhyme

Our English teacher
most that eighth-grade year—
he was gawky and tall
bespectacled and bald
and as devoid of warmth
as body fat.

And this demand
which topped it all—
we'd have to memorize
a hundred lines of poetry!
(Uncertain on the quantity
it actually may been more) .

But such were we
and such the time
that we applied
and then amazed ourselves
and in our doing found
the usefulness of rhyme.

Glen Kappy

On My Kitchen Counter

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Waving like a flag
a bread crust crumb bobs along—
small black ant beneath.

Glen Kappy

On Reading A Book Of Mystic Writings

My God
confronted with things about you
I have never seen nor may not ever see
I take stock of what I know:

That there's no end to knowing you
but I would lie to say that I know nothing.

That I'm convinced—but cannot prove—
it was you who told me I was home.

That all these years since then
there's been an inside job—
my heart's been going soft
so I am crying more and more
and tasting people from the inside out
and seeing so much beauty
it is hardly wonderfully bearable.

That over and over I have been revived
by dreams by songs by people
and I believe—but cannot prove—
that you are the subversive source beneath them all
who likes to do such things the way that nature
multiplies and reinvents herself
so we are overwhelmed.

That if all this has nothing to do with you—
which I can never prove—there still remains my gratefulness.

Glen Kappy

On Rembrandt's Bathsheba

She's not what I'd imagine—
skin not brown but pale
belly and thighs not firm nor smooth—
in both the look of cellulite.
But her face in profile looking down—
her inwardness—compel me.

This is a woman as she is—
no air brush, make-up—
a woman simply real.
And you, O Master
were so familiar with the Real—
with plenty—and less
and Loss—so much of loss!
and Flesh—of course.

I first take in her face
then well-formed breasts and arms
the whole that speaks such tenderness
and hear you speak of her
your common-law wife
'Isn't my Hendrickje lovely? '

Glen Kappy

On Seeing Her Picture As A Young Woman

1

Like her image
splashed
dissolving
washed away

like it
drying out
to dust
and blown away

like it
lit by flame
then curling
till it's ash

so with her
and all of us.

2

At the image of her then—
an ache.

At her condition now—
another ache—

for this beauty
so soon gone

that is buried
or scattered

or whirls
till down it disappears—

for the spinning
that stops for none

and makes us reckon

with our focus.

Glen Kappy

On Stars And Fame

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Each a sun we're told.
From here, a tiny glimmer—
one among billions.

Glen Kappy

On The Rare Capture Of A Megamouth Shark

from 'Wonderful and Wise'

The picture shows
a gathering of people.
Its fourteen feet and bulbous head
the focus of their circle.

With them standing there
I wonder at all we do not know
of the deep below—its usual realm—
a perpetual blue-black midnight
the only stars its fellow creatures
that pulse with chemical light—
and of the deep above it mirrors—
celestial bodies and expanding limits
always further than our sight
and called, mistakenly, a void.

With them standing there
my hope is nurtured by life
that bubbles and explodes and reproduces
unfathomable and infinite—
ever beyond our clumsy reach
our ability to catalog or count
ever beyond our uses.

Glen Kappy

One Poem

Some ideas
some images
keep cropping up
in poems.

And I wonder if
they're like
the sounds
at daybreak—
crickets, birds
then traffic—
but all one dawn

wonder if
the all we write
is one big poem—
so many telling
of our outer body
then the many
of its inner workings
and connections—
so vital to its life
but often hidden
from our view.

I wonder if
it's all one poem.

Glen Kappy

Only For A Moment

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Only for a moment
boulevard of street lamps / dawning sky□
compete.

Glen Kappy

Orientation To Baseball

A reply to aficionados of other sports who ask,
'How can you like baseball? '

Baseball is a Duke's game in July
picking popcorn from a striped container, imbibing beer
consuming your own comestibles.
It's friends, colors, brilliance of New Mexico light
followed by a temperature-perfect evening.
It's not the movies or the theater where a cough is out of place.
It assumes relaxation, embodies 'casual.'
Cracks of bats and cheers of crowd are pleasant offerings
against summer cicada drone.

Well into October you can turn it on
with take-home midterm you need to work on
lunch to make, dishes to do
and it eases, comforts—
like the sudden scent of flowers on a tedious hike.

It's not football, basketball, hockey—
sports like work days on assembly lines
that only stop for lunch and breaks.
Baseball belongs with dogs on porches
cats in wisteria shade, lakes, row boats, fishing poles;
benches in parks while watching kids, pigeons
parents pushing strollers, and smiling old folks ambling by.
So when it finally gets too cold
it has to winter where it's warm—
the D.R. or Arizona or down in St. Pete.

Glen Kappy

Overcast

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

It's overcast.
The air thick and warm.
And so still... so still...

Glen Kappy

Panty Hose Meditation

1

I flip the bathroom switch
and panty hose on curtain rod
hang before my squinting eyes.

I pull them down so I can bathe—
their saggy nothingness humorous, pathetic
apart from what they sheathe.

Dry except for hanging toes
I hang them at another place.

2

Our bodies are like them
when displayed from open caskets—
they most impress by what is gone.

Our flesh containers draw taut, dry out
then turn to dust—
what's left like wreckage of a little plane.

What filled them
moved them through the air—
now gone forever—

our bodies
not our permanent containers.

Glen Kappy

Partners

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Stem of Autumn Sage
sags beneath a huge black bee—
springs back for more!

Glen Kappy

People Who Love Their Dogs And Vice Versa

1

A stately pair—
man and his German Shepherd
keeping a good pace—
a missing hind leg
no problem.

2

He hardly walks
but it's not about him—
he attends his dog—
long legs stiff with age
each slow step with pain.

3

Grizzled, stiff-legged
the mostly black Lab
waddles to the ball
then flops down—the man
smiles at his old friend.

4

Like her on the bench
this white-faced dog is content
to sit on its bum—
staying near
panting rhythmically.

5

She kneels scooping poop.
A Hound and Shepherd mix
leashes on the grass
sit up straight right by
panting patiently.

6

Shepherd pup
prances in his twisted leash—
eagerly looks up

to the woman
who holds it.

Glen Kappy

People Who Love Their Dogs And Vice Versa: A Conclusion

She tosses the ball
and her dog retrieves it—
meeting both their needs—
the pats, endearments—
rituals of love.

Glen Kappy

Pin Lights

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Boy dashing through grass—
kicked up at this heels—
sunlit water drops.

Glen Kappy

Poet's Credo

For a life that's balanced—one that's fecund—
it's living first and poetry second.

Glen Kappy

Prayer For Help With Forgiveness

Send strong winds, O God
and sweep away
the hatreds and the hurts.

Sweep them
roots and all
from memory's ground

to lie beneath
your blazing light
and dry to sterile dust.

Send strong winds, O God
and sweep away
the hatreds and the hurts.

Glen Kappy

Praying Man-Tis

from 'Wonderful and Wise'

His
every
movement
meditation

who
would
guess
he

—————flies!

□

Glen Kappy

Pristine

We'd traveled many miles
with all the sameness—
fence posts in a blur
as we rushed by—
before we came upon
this crossing of the Snake.

And there—surprise! —
a view that made us stop
that made me think
of Clark and Lewis
paddling their canoes
until they saw this very spot.

Was it pristine then?
Or was it at that moment
we just had to park our car?
Or any time or sight
it would be false
to use the word 'again'?

Glen Kappy

Rain In Drought

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

So long without it
sound of gurgle, trickle, splash—
like drinking.

Glen Kappy

Rain Prayer

from 'Prayers'

The ground is parched—
its lips are cracked—
O let it drink and drink of rain.

And all that sprouts would praise—
a million times more intricate and eloquent
than Shakespeare's stock and use of words—

the headline act! —
with every porch a private box to view the blessed event—
we'd dance and cheer and soak in it.

And even jerkied hearts
would turn to thoughts of you
and even bitter tongues give thanks.

Glen Kappy

Redhead Woman Jogger With Long Ponytail

from 'While Passing Through'/Winter

Thick, straight, to mid-back

I, male human, notice.

What attracts stallions?

Glen Kappy

Refresh Us, God, A Prayer

Refresh us, God
refresh us with drenching rains
that will make our own irrigations laughable
that will make for lush vegetable growth
and heady fragrance
and shade so cool it is nearly drinkable.

Precious is the thirst
that makes us long for your cloud and shower
but before all moisture is gone
and cracks appear in our contentment
refresh us so every grain and cell
will know your sentient and revitalizing power.

Glen Kappy

Remembering Sox

from 'The Convenient Cat'

As I open door—
absence of her meows
her recriminations.

Her litter box—
months unused now—
still where it was.

No warmth
where she had curled on couch—
no cat.

Glen Kappy

Reminders

A man I know—
more than an acquaintance
perhaps not quite a friend—
had a heart attack two weeks ago—
"out of the blue, " no prior warning—
and was laid up in the hospital
for several days.

This morning as is usual
my passwords let me in.
But recently my panic rising
my fingers tapped and tapped
the keys that seemed the same
that always worked before—
would I be barred forever? !

Our granddaughter—
position prominent
in the home that is our hearts—
the light of our affection on her—
I cannot/must not think
if tragedy struck as tragedy does
for all of us in time.

What does it take
to make us grateful? —
for another day
for everything "normal";
for the loved ones near
we take for granted—
what does it take?

Glen Kappy

Resonance

Some things
strike a chord in us
and stay with us
even if we don't know why.

'The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls'
was the first poem
that this happened to me—

the image of those footprints
that the waves effaced from sand
plucked on something in me.

What could I know
when I read this as a boy
of death, impermanence—
had I even heard that word?

But still it stayed.
I knew beaches, sand
and the imprints
that my feet made in it—
this I could understand.

And the years went by
which can be measured
in the cycles of the tides
and now near seventy
I better know its meaning.

But the rhythms of that poem
that soothe just like a lullaby
calm me even so.

Glen Kappy

Rocking

Boy on a swing
perhaps fourteen?
back and forth
and back and forth
and singing as he does it.
There through summer
and rocking now—
alone—always there alone.

Middle school boy
in class last week—
new to the school
and new to English—
blind boy rocking
back and forth
and back and forth
slight smile on his lips
and listening? or just amused
at his own thoughts?

Outsized Paul
a high school junior
blind and gifted
with voice to awe
his school assembly
and hormones and rocking
that try the reins
of his control.

Rocking babies.
Rocking chairs.
Does our rocking
match our heartbeats?

What do we need
to make us ready?
What do we need
to face the world?

Boy on a swing
perhaps fourteen?
just by himself and rocking
and singing as he does it.

Glen Kappy

Sabbath Reverie, A Home Pome

With his wife he lies content
on Saturday morning.

In the sky above their home
the sound of a small plane passing by.

Which brings to mind a little boat—
half-horse engine rippling slowly
to the middle of a sheltered lake—

play of sun and shade, warm and cool—
the perfect time of day.

In it a man in floppy hat
has sons who make him worry—
he lets it go.

A house to work on
with no time nor money to get it done—
he lets that go.

A fishing license
that he left on top his dresser—
he would rather eat chicken anyway.

He cuts the engine
arranges cooler, pillow, hat
exhales a sigh as he lowers himself back

then lets the boat just drift—
rocking slightly as he dozes.

Glen Kappy

Salida, Colorado

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

In the chill dawn air
the doe, the magpie, the crow
have the same stiff gait.

Glen Kappy

Sandaled Feet

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Before day's heat
sandaled feet push through thick grass—
moisture wets my toes.

Glen Kappy

Scared?

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Hummingbird takes off
as the hawk looms over—
he left the safety
of his perch
on a yucca's wicked point.

Glen Kappy

Scrawny Chicken

The image in the mirror
leaves me somewhat stricken—
for what I see reflected there
looks like a mostly-plucked and scrawny chicken.

Glen Kappy

Seen From Hot Street

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

In pool of shade
on watered lawn
sparrow belly-deep.

Glen Kappy

Semi-Retired In Early Spring

A Monday morning. Early spring.
No work today—nor worries.
Setting out to walk three errands
he is greeted by a house finch singing.

He doesn't try to spot the bird
but if he's like the one
he saw the other day
he knows he sports a crimson bib.

There are other birds—
the pleasant medley of their sounds
their flight against the blue
fill out his first impressions.

The forecast got it right—
it is clear and calm indeed—
the sun a welcome friend
in cool that makes a walk a pleasure.

On the street before the library
wisteria! —and maybe lilac too—
their sweetness waking up
his drowsing sense of smell.

The items that he carried now dropped off
he heads to get his sisters birthday cards—
a rare exchange of greetings he forgot last year
so this year he is starting early.

He scans then opens cards in this familiar store.
Before too long—success! And with two cards
steps over to the counter where a new girl waits.
He registers she's early college age

and slim and tall—brunette and beautiful—
before her smile—so broad and unaffected—
turns him to a boy—a flutter in his belly
and deliberate with his words so he won't stammer.

Lastly to the co-op just a few doors down
and now back up the hill and musing
this a day to make him want to write a poem—
with all it stirs and all it brings a poem in itself.

Glen Kappy

Seraglio

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

In sleepy coolness
of this sheltered spot

a robin and some doves
who share a line

fluff themselves
and preen

as sun's first rays come in
to minister to them.

Glen Kappy

Serenade?

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Mr. Scrub Jay,
does the Mrs. hear your call
as serenade?

Glen Kappy

She Walks

In early light
a street or so ahead
a body walking
much in silhouette—
a woman—
and for a moment
hard to see
her movement
is away from me.

Somewhat tall
and slim
she walks—
not heavily
nor daintily
but easily
and keeping
a good pace.

She walks
as one
who knows
she's valued—
not timidly
nor haughtily
but showing
quiet dignity.

(And blessed
is she
and blessed
be they
this message
made it through.)

How young?
How old?
I'm curious
to see her face.

But still
a street or so ahead
she walks.

Glen Kappy

Shedding

from 'The Convenient Cat'

Cat hair on the chairs and sofas
hair clumps on the floor
cat reclining on my bed(! ?) —
I chase him out the door.

Glen Kappy

Shooting Star

Remembering Terry Bagg

1

At that Village reading
even with the coughs
and shuffling papers

even though
my turn to read
was coming up

still I heard
still took in your words—
their range! their nuance!

How were you able
as one so young?

How snatch
the music from the ether
then turn it into phrase?

Though stung by jealousy
my awe gave tacit praise.

2

To meet in London
so soon after—

how far-fetched
how unexpected.

With you in your flat
and at that bar

I felt and saw
how vulnerable you were

how the genius in you

was burning fast

and as time has sadly proven
could not last.

Glen Kappy

Short Song, A Home Pome

O Lover

as the fly
I saw this morning

sunk and resting
in a large white rose

so me in you
my sweet repose.

Glen Kappy

Shy Moon

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Morning sky.
Behind the clouds overhead
the moon looks shy.

Glen Kappy

Skeleton Dog

from 'Wonderful and Wise'

Not since Mexico
had I witnessed
such a dog—
Mexico with poverty
insistent in my memory—

the beggars lining roads
with hands outstretched
the children flocking
to our car like sparrows
for a hunk of bread.

Not since then
the hollow contour
of the belly and hind legs—
each rib protruding
like a knuckle.

But this one
had a larger frame
and looked to be
a purebreed—
how come to this?
And why?

He was poking
at some trash put out
for weekly pick-up—
but he couldn't puncture
through the bag.

At my approach
he limped away
and turned his head
to me at intervals
and moaned.

Snail Mornings

from 'Dreams and Visions'

As sun gently warms and dries
drips and drops still fall from rainspout
forming circles in the metal tub below
that brims with last night's rain.
And snails make their moist way over pavement
and up the rain-pearled leaves and stalks.
And birds have a special song—
not the thick and rousing music of an anthem—
but here and there between the trees—
a kindly invitation:

Stay... stay...
If God himself does not call you away
stay... stay...
And take this drink amongst dryness
this wholesome juice
that's served in a chilled and long-stemmed glass.

For appetites will urge us on
and plans though drawn with just a line or two
consume our attention
snails flex up into their shells
and this time for meditation and wonder vanish
like the damp stain on washed cement.

Glen Kappy

Snowflakes

from 'While Passing Through'/Winter

Snowflakes—
each exquisitely wrought—
the billions of... us.

Glen Kappy

Snowing Seeds

It's snowing seeds!

From all the elms
with graceful limbs
that arch above the park
the off-white
nearly weightless disks
begin their journeys
floating in the wind.

A huff—

and on the street ahead
some move in lines
like foamy surf
that nears a shore.

Some sweep around
and travel into driveways.

Some in circles spin.

And some—
amidst the sounds
of shaking leaves
and gathered chorus
of their ticking—
make wide arcs in phalanx
up the street—
against the wind and gravity! —
as if they had
a life their own—

and they do
it comes to me—
they really do.

Glen Kappy

Somewhere Deep I Knew

from 'Remembering Kappy'

Somewhere deep I knew my father loved me.

Like all parents, like all people
he had his past—the nurture and the nature—
and his present to contend with.
He was often short on patience—angry—
with the business pressures, family frustrations
and his body with its troubles.

But I knew it—knew it deeper than
my early memories of treats he brought
and time he took to teach us baseball.
Somehow in those infant years the touch I felt
the smiles I saw, the proud paternal gaze
was passed unknowing into me—embedded in my cells—
perhaps the way a plant responds to light and music.

So underneath it all—and there was much—I knew.

Glen Kappy

Sounds This Morning

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Bushtits foraging
in my desert willow
traffic passing.

Glen Kappy

Spring Morning Meditation

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Mid morning.
The sights and sounds
of early spring
are everywhere.

High above—
the sky so blue
jets chalk its dome
in different directions.

How and when
to get from here
to the next somewhere?
Do we always need new vistas?

Glen Kappy

Spring's Big Tent Show

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

In chill morning air
woodpecker's echoing sound—
like tent pegs driven
for spring's colorful show
that's coming soon.

Glen Kappy

Squirrel Dream

from 'Dreams and Visions'

It's night. I'm walking home
passing a small park.

I hear 'irresistible'
from a small male voice

and look down
and over.

A squirrel
out of Disney

scampers alongside
to keep up with me

so homely
that he's cute.

Then says something like
he can see I'm a generous fellow.

I keep walking
and he stays beside.

He tries a third time
then gives up.

I pass houses on my street
warm light from their windows

and enter my home
well-lit and welcome

and wonder
should I have stopped?

He wouldn't have taken money

would he?

And I didn't have
any nuts in my pocket.

Glen Kappy

St. Francis And The Fly

from 'Wonderful and Wise'

Did Francis preach to you, O fly
while you buzzed about his food?

Or was a swat his swift reply
so he might in peace conclude?

Glen Kappy

Still Life With Turtle

His head is up
but he's still
as a mossy stone...

Ah! —his throat
puffs in and out...

He blinks...

Below him
in the pond
small goldfish
wave in place
swish lazily
or dart about...

The rhythmic sound
of water pumping...

In the waking world
a little further out
sounds of robins
house finches
common sparrows
mourning doves
gold finches

and traffic
passing.

Glen Kappy

Submerged

Two giant collections of humor
on the floor beside my bed.
My appetite for them is small—
their few laughs like empty bottles of ale
that bob at whim of brooding waters.

I read *The Old Man and the Sea* instead
remember naked will rubbed raw
by prickly rope and constant pressure.

It is only myself I carry
but the weight is heavy—
perhaps the heaviest weight of all.
My soul keeps moving—but in shuffle steps—
waiting hope submerged to show itself again.

Glen Kappy

Summer Morning Walks

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

From bogged in thought
to sound of crickets—
cool, rhythmic, soothing.

☒

Even the hawk
large, cautious by the puddle
needs to drink.

☒

Tree shadows
on green-gold grass—
Impressionist joy!

☒

I hear them—
goldfinches calling.
Must I see them?

☒

I'm out early.
Troubled mind. In distant haze—
hot-air balloons.

*

Most in shadow still
this summer dawn.
I drink the cool.

Glen Kappy

Swings

Yesterday—the final day of school—
the children would have filled the seats
their arcing back and forth and back and forth
approaching to perpetual motion.

This morning—sunny, clear—
the rectangles of their plastic seats
of red and yellow, green and blue
seem less than bright and—if possible—
more than still.

Glen Kappy

The Artist

An artist is a peculiar type—
accept this if you can—
in part an intellectual—
another part a caveman.

Glen Kappy

The Backyard

So lit
tle

seems
to happen

till
I sit

Glen Kappy

The Bees And Me

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Bees on Russian Sage
me sweeping beneath them—
it's this dance we do.

Glen Kappy

The Birds And The Beetles

The worms and birds and beetles
on our apples have not munched a little.
I thought them all until I found
snails suctioned to the apples on the ground.

Glen Kappy

The Blue Door

Like the blue
of the New Mexico sky
when you look
straight up.

A side door
recessed in tan stucco
with its own arch
and smallish feel

I think Hobbit—
of welcome
of comfort
of another realm.

Blue like the sky
and a door
I wonder what awaits
on the other side.

Glen Kappy

The Cable Too

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

Strung on plain brown poles
the cable, too, is kissed
by the rising sun.

Glen Kappy

The Cask Of Poe And That Which Craves It

The thing inside
that craves the cask

that makes the body
do its bidding—

lower and lower
by plunge or by degrees—

cannot be walled
as anchorites well know.

If it has a body
then it lives on

though it may back itself
into an inner grotto.

So they are right who say
I "am" not "was" an addict

who self-aware depend upon
the Higher Power

and consider it a boon
to see what is pathetic.

Glen Kappy

The Future

Like the bird call
that I hear—
the unfamiliar one—

the one I follow
to a tree
then scan—

a flutter! —
blur! —
then it flies on.

Glen Kappy

The Heart As Tabernacle

Like it
it's moved about

through desert shrub
and enemy sun

and to rare refreshment of oases
which the soul and body so much need.

It has its court
and outer chamber

where acquaintances are met
first casual then serious by increments.

Most inner, tender, vulnerable
is its holy place—

there God speaks
and only trusted few let near—

who with us through terrains
both rough and smooth

in light and shadow
hold us dear

who most familiar will hold yet
the sanctity of choice inviolate.

Glen Kappy

The Our And Us In The Lord's Prayer

Each prayer
a drop
in the largest sea—
the water mirror calm.

And it's okay
if first you think
yourself, your family—
those closest to your heart.

But let your care
concern, awareness
ripple ever outward
where they never end—

for like the universe itself
this sea expands forever
and even lazy circles
find the edges of the world.

The story we are told
says our origins are one
and this and the latest 'news'
show we are all in this together.

Glen Kappy

The Pull Of Poetry

I got there
just before it closed
and checked out
the book of poetry
I had on hold

and took it
to my car
and opened it—
the key unturned
in my ignition—

and read... and read...
till all was in blue shadow
and the chill insistent
on my neck
and shoulders.

Glen Kappy

The Room, A Home Pome

The room I call a closet—
bulging crowded stacked—
in places near the ceiling—
holding your supplies for sewing
quilting beading tinwork knitting
photography and more—

this room could stand for us—
for you the restless doer—
drawers and shelves and bins
for tools supplies and books
that you like near—

and me compulsive cleaner—
with my preference for order
weekly pushing vacuum
through the narrow path that's left
between the clutter on its floor.

And it could stand for something else—
the much of what you mean to me
(as it comes to me this morning) —
the countless moments shared
which only mind, not space, could store

your generous and unbent heart
your honesty concerns accomplishments
(which make me proud of you)
the fun the places pleasures
that your freer self has led me to

and not the least—
the debt I've come to know
for what you've done in shaping me—
that makes me better than I was
when we began those years ago.

It could almost stand—
for stuffed unto its uttermost

with the sum of what I know and feel—
this closet room could never hold enough—
a warehouse would be better still.

Glen Kappy

The School Year Is An Engine Or A Teacher Observes Retirement

The school year
is an engine—

the yellow bus a symbol
of its sights and sounds.

The kids have boarded—
the bus drives on.

The coming fall, the holidays
are part of it.

The pressures and reprieves
the colors like the autumn leaves

the children's voices
in the classrooms and the halls—

they all are part
and roll on with the tires.

The school year
is an engine.

From his kitchen
he can hear its sounds.

Glen Kappy

The Struck Gong

The struck gong
lingers... lingers...

So the warmth of bodies
on beds and couches.

So ripples
pushing outwards.

So memories:
The glow of love—
the basking after
before the plunge back into life.
A kind word or touch or smile.
The moments that our cat
comes back—
pulling into driveway after work
or opening the door.
The looks and sayings
of my dad—
already five years gone.

Does the gong go on—
and on! —
beyond when we can hear it?

Like water of our earth
that rains and runs is used
and taken up
then rains again—
is there anything
that ever wholly disappears?

Or like the papery seed of elm—
one of billions—
blown into a corner
or into mulch beneath a bush—
are all things
we forget a while

waiting biding
till a future
till a rising
free from time?

Glen Kappy

The Sun Is Lacking, A Heart Song

The sun is lacking—as the rain proves.
But my trust is in God unfailing—
He is almighty and invisible
and all the stars were created by him.

Substance decays.
Heat and light are easily hindered.
But he has power over all of them.
At his command the worlds are shaken.
The planets are dust in his hand.

As the little child at the window
looking out at the storm
but warm and dry in his parents' house
so is my soul in God
a refuge that cannot be taken.

Glen Kappy

The Way To Start A Day?

Out from his front door
unkempt and scarcely dressed
he looks for it—
the banded roll
flung on to his driveway.

Glen Kappy

The Wholeness Of A Saint

From living learn the wholeness of a saint—
for when to hold and when throw off restraint.

Glen Kappy

The Wonder Of Thought

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

In my pocket
my fingers feel two pills—
headache I forgot!

*

Only one lap
around the park—
but many journeys!

Glen Kappy

Thinking Of One Just Passed

Thinking of one
just passed

the light of his face
now gone

I am like one unmoored
like one just born—

mutely conscious
and for instinct only this—

to look up, look out
for one who knows and cares—

for a parent—
my God—our God—to you.

Glen Kappy

This Sphinx

from 'The Convenient Cat'

This sphinx also has the body of a cat and
color of the desert sand

but isn't fronted by a human head—
it's that of a regular cat instead.

He's not chiseled out of stone
but made of muscle, fur, and bone

and speaks no riddle
but he statue-like in kitchen's middle

and refraining from the plaintive meow
communicates he wants more wet food now.

Glen Kappy

Thought For The Day?

As I've been known to utter—
you're welcome to this thought—
computers are convenient—
that is, until they're NOT.

Glen Kappy

Three Winter Poems

from 'While Passing Through'/ Winter

I walk alone
in winter dusk.
Jet trails into sunset.

Navel Orange

I bite its rind
gouge it with my thumb, tear it
and it—gives fragrance.

Daddy Long Legs
perched in back room corner—
lonely trapper.

Glen Kappy

Through Bosque Brush

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Wading
through bosque brush—
grasshopper escort!

Glen Kappy

Thunder Over Downtown Denver

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Sky speaks—
its message relayed
in the streets below.

Glen Kappy

Time Lapse Of Hot-Air Balloon Mass Ascension

Thanks to Anne

Recorded from a distance
silken skins inflated
they look like colorful seeds
born off by the wind.

Except we know
(what is hard to see)
that each
has hanging gondola
with people
with brains and thumbs
and means to lift
and give direction.

Except that seeds
(which we might think inert)
have nuclei in cells
and programs sequenced
in their hearts
that rival brains and thumbs
and people in their gondolas
pulling for more gas.

Glen Kappy

Tiresmith

The hissing blasts—
machine gun spurts—
the clank of metal banging metal—
the shouting to be heard—

the dimness and the need
to pick a path around tires—
the grime which made it hard
to find a place to lean or sit.

But him—his speed, his skill—
which likely made it cost so little—
but most of all was this—
his manners and his gentleness.

Glen Kappy

To Fly

from 'Dreams and Visions'

To fly!
To stand at ledge of life and leap—
NOT to thinnest air—
but to the arms of God—
to cast off restraint and soar! —
over trees and meadows
and urban landscapes too—
for they also can be beautiful from this view.

No shell about me—propellers in its wings—
nor parachute nor any prosthesis at all—
for this is about trust—
giving beggars what they ask for
without taking stock
of paper, coin, or what we might go without—
bank accounts, assets, inheritances—
everything that insulates
from the nerve-tingling rush of life.

It's about living unencumbered
NOT believing we have to be shrewd, suspicious, tight-fisted
vigilant for those who want to rip us off
NOT believing we HAVE to wear shoes (steel-toed to be ideal)
lest the goatheads and broken glass of life do damage to our feet.

It's about tasting life ravenous to experience and learn
about intoxication and contagion
as the sacred pipe of LIFE is passed in solemn circle
and we recover what it means to LIVE.

It's NOT about ego—
for everybody knows
we cannot defy gravity on our own.
It has to be a gift—from God alone.
And I think God's given it already.
It's there to take.
If we want it.

Glen Kappy

To One Unseen

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Crouched from glare and heat
he leans into his cell phone
speaks to one unseen.

Glen Kappy

To Prize Give Paws

from 'The Convenient Cat'

Proverbs 23: 4

He crouched behind a sprinkler head.
I could not see where focus led.

He slowly moved in taller green
to keep himself from being seen.

And then the feline pounced at prey—
I saw a hopper hop away.

With jumps and swipes cat kept invading—
with hops the locust kept evading...

I didn't stay for sure demise
(such violence would drench my eyes) —
but wondered, was it tasty prize?

Glen Kappy

To Sing Your Greatness, A Heart Song

To sing your greatness, God
is never tiresome to me
and I will go on singing it forever.

What are your workings like, O God?
And how is it I feel
in my relationship to you?

They're like the pulse of a metropolis—
intense and palpable by day
but noticed by its absence in the silent night.

And like its generators, dynamos
which give it all its power
but are hidden from our sight.

And like your secret agent
I roam its maze of streets
but always with the comfort
of your nearness and directions.

From God, the 'Father, ' the 'Head of All'
I have my standing orders that I love and bless—
to everyone I meet as I was given.
I love my mission, God. Amen.

Glen Kappy

Too Early

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

Seated with coffee
I try to gather myself
as gray light
seeps through blinds.

Sometimes dawn
comes too early.

Glen Kappy

Trail

from 'While Passing Through'/Fall

October morning.
Trail of silvery circles
on the damp flagstone—
the snail—poem—thought
that eludes me.

Glen Kappy

Two Like Charges, A Home Pome

To my son

As it seems in this time of my life
the dates looked-forward-to
make all the time between go faster
and become just unremembered interims.

The time is near—or maybe past? —
you said that you might visit.
So I wonder if your plans have changed
or if you have an opportunity you can't pass up.

Not that I thought a visit would be easy—
two of us who seem to share like charges.
But for us I think this pushing and repelling
is the way we love—two men with their own minds
who try at least to come together.

Glen Kappy

Vacation Plans

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Vacation plans—
the smoke of wild fires
where we were headed.

Glen Kappy

Vermeer In Four Dimensions, A Home Pome

1

You beckon me
beneath the covers...

2

Coffee in the air.
Pattern of sunlight and blinds
on cool oak floor.
Van* CD in background
as we bathe and slowly move
to getting ready.

3

The mug I bring wafts upwards.
I putter moving this and folding that.
You browse a book of quilts.

4

As we struggle through transitions
question where to work and live
will we find more perfect moments?

*Van Morrison

Glen Kappy

View From Outside

from 'The Convenient Cat'

I stand at kitchen window
licking spoon with sweet

but cat outside who hungry stares
might think it blood or meat.

Glen Kappy

Village Poetry Reading

I met him at an open reading
in the basement of a church in Greenwich Village.
He stood to read—curly blond hair to shoulders
granny glasses, slight body in cotton turtleneck and jeans
baritone voice with arrogant edge and upper crust enunciation.

I heard his poems and wilted
like a plant dried up by blazing sun—
his grasp of life art literature far beyond his twenty years
a gift with words and range
to match his subtle thought.

At a table extra long—probably for pot-luck meals—
most of us with poems like scraps of bread
he spread a feast like the finest chef.

My eyes found Ree—with genius herself
whose look in reply said 'Isn't he something? '
I looked to others round the table
expecting other mouths agape at this display.
But they were absently shuffling papers and looking away.

Glen Kappy

Vowed To Silence For A Day

Vowed to silence for a day
I walk in morning air and hear
crowing cocks nearer, further
cawing crow who's winging by
twittering birds who seem to speak
for all the pores of earth
that joy to open for the sun
barking dogs nearer, further
thrum of traffic and a world awaking...

And I think that we are made to talk—
that I can keep back angry words
but how to hold delight?

Glen Kappy

Waking In Pre-Dawn Dark

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Leaves rustle.
A branch raps the roof.
Just me in big bed.

Glen Kappy

We Have A Fountain

We have a fountain
which I forget
while reading
scripture, poems
in the pre-dawn hour.

But then
I set aside the books
and cradle coffee
close my eyes...
We have a fountain—
gurgle, splash...

Glen Kappy

Weathering

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Glimpse of peeling paint
from age and weathering
make me think, neglect—
maybe I'm not
old enough yet.

Glen Kappy

Website

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

My forehead's caught! —
spider's line of silk it strung
across my door.

Glen Kappy

Weekly Scrabble Game At My Dad's New Apartment

from 'Remembering Kappy'

By the fourth game all of us were buzzed—
by vodka-and-tonic in my dad
white wine in me and my twin brother.
And while my dad took time to contemplate his moves
we two sang parts of doo-wop songs.

About to take our leave
my dad waxed lyrical about his wife, our mother—
now twenty-eight years passed—
wondering aloud that she was drawn to him
who had no future and just an eighth-grade education.

And I beheld this man—my heart in different state—
whom I had asked to leave my home a mere two weeks ago.

Glen Kappy

What Don Juan De Marco Knows, A Home Pome

May you be intoxicated always
by her love. Proverbs 5: 19

I've known bliss
with her
but must begin again.

I've felt teasing—
primal, intense—
adoring hands
wonders under silks
soaring ecstasies—

but they must be
as at the first—
a mystery.

Courter once again
I must rapture
at a distant glimpse of her—
apart from time
delight in every feature.

Then once again
to touch her hand will thrill
like consummation.

Glen Kappy

What Light Can Do

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Around the porch light
as day begins—the moths!
All colors! All types!

Glen Kappy

When I Should Be Working, A Home Pome

When I left this morning

your hair
was in shining disarray

your features
soft and sleepy

your mouth
a smile of contentment

and your contours
molded by the sheet.

I kissed you lightly
said 'have a good day'
and you purred 'mmmmm.'

Now at work I dream you'd call:

'Tell them that I need you home
and wait for me outside.'

Then all would be
intensified, slowed down—

your driving
while you held me in your eyes

our moving
from the car inside

and the click that's followed
by the music of Jobim—
a cue for me to dance with you.

Glen Kappy

When Rain Means Tears

A sudden rain
came down—

with rising sun
behind it—

in pulsing lines
of light.

Especially when rain
means tears—

to have this sight! —
to have this sight.

Glen Kappy

Where, Dad?

from 'Remembering Kappy'

Dad
we have your ashes—
but where are you?

Glen Kappy

Who Are We?

'Naked came I from my mother's womb,
and naked I shall return.' —Job 1: 21

Who are we anyway?

Think stick bug
shown close up
and moving slowly
on a branch.

For another shape
think stink bug
butt up and picking its way
on the ground.

Not that we're nothing.
But take away
all the thought
all the airy nothing

that surrounds us
like a cloud of gnats
that blurs from clarity
that keeps us from asking

what are we anyway?

and what remains
are vases
holding spirits
utterly vulnerable.

While God
who cares
inclines toward us
and waits.

Glen Kappy

Wind Which Rattles Trees

from 'While Passing Through'/Spring

Wind which rattles trees
and shudders windows...
what sound its own?

Glen Kappy

Winter Tree At Sunset

from 'While Passing Through'/Winter

Thanks to Seamus O'Brian

Its black silhouette
against the fire-orange sky—
what this ache in me?
Can I consume it? —
swallow this scene whole?

Glen Kappy

With My Eyes Closed And Trying To Stretch In The Dawn Quiet

from 'The Convenient Cat'

Sudden cold and wet
on my right little toe—
cat nose rubbing.

Glen Kappy

Worker

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

Bumble bee
in Blanket Flower center—
what a worker!

Glen Kappy

Worst Case Scenario

from 'While Passing Through'/Winter

Trees stripped—bitter winds—
the sparrows somehow make it—
what of us?

Glen Kappy

Young Hawk

from 'While Passing Through'/Summer

The young hawk
big as he is
seems to cry a lot.

Glen Kappy