

Spleen

For single beer that silver dollar
walked to town and came back
thirstier with five sticks of diet
gum but couldn't decide which
to pick: To drink or not to drink?
Does tap water slake worse than
Aspartame? I thought I'd study
our Constitution one final time
to try recalling just what it was
all about but sweat like hot acid
burned yellowed page to ashes,
raised toxic vapor to poisonous
air. I don't bathe in tub, the lake
or stream and musky trail leads
straight to Middle Ages. Smart
experts claim in 30 years or so
plastic in the sea will outweigh
the fishes. Be careful you don't
breathe our atmosphere too long
or dine on grilled costly halibut
sick before a trawler's five-mile
net dragged ocean floor. Or iffy
eggs of hens high on methadrine
or steroid, a new wonder miracle
drug christened devilishly to ring
alluring, death sexual, mysterious.
Avoid those strangers who all day
watch naked strangers pretend to
love, invade another's warm body
for chill cash. A Scotch, cigarettes
each hour or you remember cruel
joke you're supposed to cling to

with fierce extended claws while
a nurse turns off your ventilator
when Medicare expires. Well, at
least you lived much longer than
Jesus Christ, Lincoln, King, even
though you can't place now who
or what they were or meant to be.
Better not do anything except lie
to hopeful children already here
best you can so they won't wake
screaming early mornings in our
wronged world they never chose.
Your kind mother comforted you,
repeating soothingly, "It'll be all
right," unknowing she spoke of
Heaven, not Earth. I'm uncertain
who's good enough to receive an
answered prayer but I do pray for
charity to fall at last like washing
rain not 40 but 10,000 days until
Bengal tiger, the elephants return.