



4 POEMS

By

Charles Rammelkamp

WHY I LIKE IT Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes...

Rammelkamp's box-set of these four varied verses are almost as indivisible as they are irresistible. Be still, each stand on their own, paying homage to: innocence, the alphabet, creativity and fear. What else is there, really? Let me get you started: "Give us this day our daily..." (They all set-out like that at the outset.) I just love "At this hour the day beckons...the pink glow of a rising sun / kissing the horizon full on the lips...like wish-fulfillment on a stick. / Take a lick." Now, for all the morning persons who are cursed to attract nocturnal creatures, dare to recite it. You will likely and rightly be seriously beaten. Lots of other good lines. I've already taken too much of your time citing my favorite...(Spacing is poet's own)

Our Daily Innocence

Give us this day our daily cherry,
I sing in silent gratitude,
watching the banana-yellow schoolbus
coming down the street,
full of promise as fruit
ripening on a vine.

At this hour the day beckons
so hopefully,
the pink glow of a rising sun
kissing the horizon full on the lips;
the guarantee of challenge and achievement
like wish-fulfillment on a stick.
Take a lick.

I check one final time.
“Got your homework?”
“Yes, Daddy.”
“Got your lunch bags?”
“Yes, Daddy.”

The bus wheezes to a stop.
The doors spring open.

Our Daily Alphabet

Give us this day our daily word,
a molecule of meaning
its atomic make-up,
like a riddle of DNA,
electron letters swirling on a page,
occasionally shocking the hell out of us.

Our Daily Creativity

Give us this day our daily inspiration,
the birth of an idea,
an engaging thought blooming to life.

As pregnant women tell me about
the kicking and rolling
of the babies in their womb,
I feel the tension of imagination,
elbowing concentration,
making room,
flexing its knees, trying to stand
in a shrinking space;
bursting, finally, with expression,
like Athena from the head of Zeus,
full blown and ready for action.

Our Daily Fear

“Give us this day our daily mortality,”
the ironic thought courses through my brain
at the same pace, for the same duration
as the pain in my abdomen
that could be the throb of a tumor,
cancer like something volcanic
erupting, spewing through my innards.

The irony is meant to mask
a fear so elemental
it's not even subject to debate.

Are you afraid of dying?
The question sounds so literary,
and so literary, too,
the notion of blissful death,
the forgetfulness of Lethe,
the Whitmanesque orgasmic personification,
the flirtatious Keatsian ease.
An inevitability, for sure,
but who needs to be reminded?

THE POET SPEAKS: *In Tom Stoppard's play, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, a number of times Guildenstern puns on the Lord's Prayer – "Give us this day our daily...." ("mask," "week," "round," "cue") He rhymes with something Rosencrantz has just said. For instance, when Claudius and Gertrude greet them and confuse their names, as they often do in the play, Rosencrantz, exasperated, cries out, "Consistency is all I ask!" Guildenstern echoes: "Give us this day our daily mask."*

The puns intrigued me, and I wrote this little series of "Give Us This Day" poems (there are about 20 altogether), with titles, "Our Daily[fill in the blank]" starting with one called "Our Dai-ly Day." Heh.

I like the mock-prayer attitude, the humility with a middle finger.

AUTHOR BIO: Charles Rammelkamp is Prose Editor for BrickHouse Books in Baltimore. His poetry collection, *A Magician Among the Spirits*, poems about Harry Houdini, is a 2022 Blue Light Press Poetry winner. Another poetry collection entitled *Transcendence* has also recently been published by BlazeVOX Books and a collection of flash fiction, *Presto*, has just been published by Bamboo Dart Press.