

# *Musing*

It's really quite easy  
if the muse is there.  
It's really quite impossible  
if she's not.

How does one attract a muse?  
What do you feed them?  
Is there something they would  
like to see or hear  
when they arrive?  
Can you keep them comfortable?  
Do they have a favorite chair?

Do they tire of your company?  
Do they get restless in the house  
long days and nights  
looking past your shoulder  
at the screen?

Does a muse refuse  
to listen to your pleading?  
Does a muse reuse  
old phrases?

Do you ask a muse to stay?  
Or in the asking  
is she compelled to go away?

Is your muse assigned to you alone?  
Or during visits does she pine  
for others she has helped along  
illuminating other manuscripts?

And while she illuminates your page  
does some other author  
shivering in rage  
and impotence and speechlessness  
pine for her  
and pray for her return?

Do muses chat about their artists  
among themselves  
off-duty  
floating in celestial realms?

Do muses have opinions?  
Do muses criticize their work?  
Each other's?  
Or their authors'?  
Have they a sense of ownership  
of what they have inspired?  
A pride for the achievement  
of their charge?

Do muses own their work  
in a kind of cosmic copyright?

Do muses own their artists  
in a kind of cosmic serfdom?  
Do muses own the universe?

Do muses grimace  
when the authorship is weak?  
When glowing notions  
translate into  
feeble phrases?

Do muses cavil about the authors  
that they meet?  
Do muses tire?  
Are muses ever bored?  
Is this why sometimes  
she doesn't come?  
She's had enough  
of forcing nectar  
through a sieve?  
Does she dread assignment  
to my process?

I like to think they're  
tireless, timeless, compassionate, loving beings  
swelling with creativity and infinite ideas  
eager to drop in again  
on each of their assignees  
swelled with pride at our accomplishments  
chatting excitedly about their  
respective charges  
always looking forward  
to a swift return.