[What Bugs Bunny Said to Red Riding Hood](#)--video link

By Tim Seibles

Say, good lookin, what brings you out thisaway
amongst the fanged and the fluffy?
Grandma, huh?
Some ol bag too lazy to pick up a pot, to feeble
to flip a flapjack --
and you all dolled up like a fire engine
to cruise these woods?

This was your mother's idea?
She been livin in a Crackerjack box or something?
This is a tough neighborhood, mutton chops --
you gotchur badgers, your wild boar, your
hardcore grizzlies... and lately,
this one wolf's been actin pretty big and bad.

I mean, what's up doc?
Didn anybody ever tell you it ain't smart to stick out in wild places?
Friendly? You want friendly you better
try Detroit. I mean
you're safe wit me, sweetcakes,
but I ain't a meat-eater.

You heard about Goldie Locks, didn'cha? Well
didn'cha? Yeah, well, little Miss Sunshine --
little Miss I'm-so-much-cuter-than-thee --
got caught on one of her sneaky porridge runs --
and the Three Bears weren't in the mood:
so last week the game warden nabs baby bear
passin out her fingers to his pals.

That's right. Maybe your motha should
turn off her soaps, take a peek at a newspaper,
turn on some cartoons, for Pete's sake:
this woyld is about teeth, bubble buns -- who's bitin
and who's getting bit. The noyve a'that broad
sendin you out here lookin like a ripe tomata.

Why don't she just hang a sign around your neck:
Get over here and bite my legs off!
Cover me with mustid -- call me a hotdawg!

Alright, alright, I'll stop.

Listen, Red, I'd hate for something unpleasant
to find you out here all alone.

Grandma-shmandma -- let'er call Domino's.
They're paid to deliver. Besides, toots,
it's already later than you think --
get a load a'that chubby moon up there.

Ya can't count on Casper tonight either.
They ran that potata-head outta town two months ago --
trying to make friends all the time --
he makes you sick after a while.

Look, Cinderella, I got some candles and some
cold uncola back at my place -- whatddaya say?

Got any artichokies in that basket?

Buffalo Head Solos

~

"**What Betsy Has to Say**"--video link

By Patricia Smith

>*In 1965, Hurricane Betsy swept through the Bahamas and South Florida, then hit the Louisiana coast, flooding New Orleans. During the four days of the storm, 75 people died.*

No nuance. Got no whisper
In you, do you girl?

The idea was not
To stomp it flat, 'trina,
All you had to do was *kiss* the land,
Brush your thunderous lips against it
And leave it stuttering, scared barren
At your very notion. Instead,

You roared through like
A goddamned man, all biceps and must,
Flinging your dreaded mane
And lifting souls up to feed your ravenous eye.

I thought I taught you better girl.
I showed you the right way to romance that city,
How to break its heart
And leave it pining for more of your slap.

So if this was your way of erasing me,
Turning me from rough lesson to raindrop,
You did it ugly, chile. Yeah, I truly enjoyed

Being God for that minute. But unlike you,
Rash gal, I left some of my signature standing.
I only killed what got in my way.

Blood Dazzler (2008)
--is a book of poetry dedicated to Hurricane Katrina

~~

Shoveling Snow with Buddha
        By Billy Collins

In the usual iconography of the temple or the local Wok
you would never see him doing such a thing,
tossing the dry snow over a mountain
of his bare, round shoulder,
his hair tied in a knot,
a model of concentration.

Sitting is more his speed, if that is the word
for what he does, or does not do.

Even the season is wrong for him.
In all his manifestations, is it not warm or slightly humid?
Is this not implied by his serene expression,
that smile so wide it wraps itself around the waist of the universe?

But here we are, working our way down the driveway,
one shovelful at a time.

We toss the light powder into the clear air.
We feel the cold mist on our faces.

And with every heave we disappear
and become lost to each other
in these sudden clouds of our own making,
these fountain-bursts of snow.

This is so much better than a sermon in church,
I say out loud, but Buddha keeps on shoveling.
This is the true religion, the religion of snow,
and sunlight and winter geese barking in the sky,
I say, but he is too busy to hear me.

He has thrown himself into shoveling snow
as if it were the purpose of existence,
as if the sign of a perfect life were a clear driveway
you could back the car down easily
and drive off into the vanities of the world
with a broken heater fan and a song on the radio.

All morning long we work side by side,
me with my commentary
and he inside his generous pocket of silence,
until the hour is nearly noon
and the snow is piled high all around us;
then, I hear him speak.

After this, he asks,
can we go inside and play cards?

Certainly, I reply, and I will heat some milk
and bring cups of hot chocolate to the table
while you shuffle the deck.
and our boots stand dripping by the door.

Aaah, says the Buddha, lifting his eyes
and leaning for a moment on his shovel
before he drives the thin blade again
deep into the glittering white snow.

Sailing Around the Room Alone

~~

The Pomegranate
By Eavan Boland

The only legend I have ever loved is
The story of a daughter lost in hell.
And found and rescued there.
Love and blackmail are the gist of it.
Ceres and Persephone the names.
And the best thing about the legend is
I can enter it anywhere. And have.
As a child in exile in
A city of fogs and strange consonants,
I read it first and at first I was
An exiled child in the crackling dusk of
The underworld, the stars blighted. Later
I walked out in a summer twilight
Searching for my daughter at bed-time.
When she came running I was ready
To make any bargain to keep her.
I carried her back past white beams
And wasps and honey-scented buddleias.
But I was Ceres then and I knew
Winter was in store for every leaf
On every tree in that road.
Was inescapable for each one we passed.
And for me.
                   It is winter
And the stars are hidden.
I climb the stairs and stand where I can see
My child asleep beside her teen magazines,
Her can of coke, her plate of uncut fruit.
The pomegranate! How did I forget it?
She could have come home and been safe
And ended the story and all
Our heart-broken searching but she reached
Out a hand and plucked a pomegranate.
She put out her hand and pulled down
The French sound for apple and
The noise of stone and the proof
That even in the place of death,
At the heart of legend, in the midst
Of rocks full of unshed tears
Ready to be diamonds by the time
The story was told, a child can be

Hungry. I could warn her. There is still a chance.
The rain is cold. The road is flint-coloured.
The suburb has cars and cable television.
The veiled stars are above ground.
It is another world. But what else
Can a mother give her daughter but such
Beautiful rifts in time?
If I defer the grief I will diminish the gift.
The legend will be hers as well as mine.
She will enter it. As I have.
She will wake up. She will hold
The papery flushed skin in her hand.
And to her lips. I will say nothing.

~~

Teaching Sophomore English
   by James Siegel

My class sits in a six by six cube, I read the
section of *Huckleberry Finn* to them where Pap's
wrath and delirium tremens cause Huck to
fabricate his escape plans. They ask, *Have you
ever cut-out,*
   do you really want to be here
      teaching us while the sun is shining
         and feel it on your face when
            the bugs haven't come out yet,
               can't we sit on a sheet, pretend
                  it's the raft, you can be Jim
                     and read to us outside
                        about the simple Mississippi
                           without tests and quizzes,
                        making the team, PSAT's,
                     being smaller than Freshmen,

just to float like Huck,
loll in the grass...

I remind them of the sun in
their eyes, the wet grass
they'll have to sit on, the
inevitability of black flies, the
hunger of wasps and hornets
until a few switch sides and
they argue back and forth—

    I read in a low tone until
they come back, sedition defeated,
Huck smears pig blood and
wishes Tom were with him—

    They start a letter to a
friend about their devious plan to
break them out of school without
getting caught.

    ~ ~ ~

A new student opens the door,
holds some kind of science project
with feathers—I point to the corner
    with skateboards, softball
        gloves, tennis racquets,
            and track shoes—the new
                student folds his greasy wings,
                and sits on his hands.
                    A new admit slip, program, schedule,
                      emergency contact form and its
                        protracted fear balance on his knee
                        until I help him up,
                    open a folding chair-desk,
                  and give him a copy of *Huckleberry Finn*
              —he rolls his eyes then mimics
          a smirk I remember,

but can't place—
                    an unusual silence
             flies across the room
like lost quills.

~ ~ ~

The class ogles from
behind their blue and orange
          bangs, their brand name t-shirts
                    and cargo pants, their yanked down
                              midriff shirts, hiked up hip-pants
                                        —they see him, blond and too tan
                                        for May. His eyes go from
                                                  window to window beyond
                                                            the parking lot. He feels
                                                                      their singular stare—
                                                                      answers the murmuring room
                                                            —Icarus, my name's Icarus.
                                                  Says he's an exchange student
                                        from an Island near Crete
                    and I think, where's the segue here?

The bell rings, I call him to my desk.
—We're halfway through...
—*Already read it.*
          You like its symbolism:
                    the river of life, the evil
                              land of civilization, the avid rogue,
                                        acute satire against slavery,
                              the voice of the narrator,
                              irreverent innocence, triumph
                    of the individual—
          shall I go on?
—What do you like?
—*Triumph of the individual,*
          of course.
—Go on.
—*Figure it out for yourself,*

I got places to be.
—Wait a minute, you can't
do as you like, we have rules here.

He grabs his wings,
heads out the door.
—Hey! Now, I have
to call the office.
I'm calling the office.

~ ~ ~

I call the office. I write
this disciplinary referral,
and when I see him weaving
between the cars in the parking lot,
I call the office. Again.

He falls on his chest, clamps wings and
harness to his back. Rolls up, runs
headlong into the wind. Elbows back
above his shoulders, he crouches, then
like a gymnast leaving the pommel
horse, vaults himself into the air.

I'm still clutching my facsimile
of the original Huckleberry Finn—
it's the smile; his elation as he took off
revealed the Tom Sawyer in me.

Task with a Creature

Think of anything you do in your life, in and outside of school. Consider your hobbies, obsessions, sports, chores, etc. Then, think of creatures or characters that you have read about or researched. Imagine you doing one of those tasks with a character or creature.

NB Often the best poems inhabit their creature, honor the creature's persona, yet add to the cannon, myth, and lore by finding a setting that the creature would not normally fit into or another character not normally associated with the creature. The creature is any dynamic character. "Amateurs borrow, professionals steal." Make it yours!

Tasks/Hobbies/Activities/ Pastimes/Obsessions/Chores	Natural, Common Setting for Creature	Creatures, People, Entities from the selected text

Suggestions for first draft:

1. Setting--where and when

      a.   What setting is in opposition to your creature's?

      b.   What setting can illuminate the essence of your creature?

      c.   What setting do you know well enough to write about well?

           i.   Begin with your setting

          ii.   Where are you?

        iii.   When does this occur? Summer, Sunday, Twilight?

        iv.   Include the important features of where and/or when

2. Task

      a.   State, show, explain your task

           i.   Either your creature is already with you or will join you

          ii.   Does your creature help or hinder you?

3. Creature's Raison D'etre:

      a.   What is the creature's motivation?

      b.   What are other characters' motivations?

           i.   How do they conflict with each other?

      c.   Your creature can change from helping to hindering, hindering to helping, or any believable combination

4. Complication--What Changes?:

      a.   Unexpected event forces a major or minor alteration of task

      b.   Show how the setting changes as a result of your task **or** how the setting changes the task **or** the task changes the setting.

      c.   Does the creature help or hinder here

5. Resolution:

      a.   Is the task completed?

      b.   Is it completed well, poorly, temporarily?

      c.   What has been learned?

           i.   Can you show some lesson learned

          ii.   Or connect an idea or feeling to others

Figure 8.3 Bloom's Revised Taxonomy with Additional Assessment Layer[4]

KNOWLEDGE DIMENSION	COGNITIVE PROCESS DIMENSION			
	RECALL	**UNDERSTAND**	**APPLY**	
FACTUAL KNOWLEDGE	**Specific/Concrete** Recall specific concrete information **Key words:** *vocabulary, names, symbols, facts, dates, sources of information, basic elements*	**Translate WHAT?** Translate the facts into one's own words **Key words:** *retell, recap, repeat*	**Original Way** Apply the information in the original context **Key words:** *apply, use, utilize*	
PROCEDURAL KNOWLEDGE	**Tools/Skills** Remember procedural definitions, tools, and skills **Key words:** *problem solving, process, algorithm, structure, method, steps, model, parts, organization, action, criteria, technique*	**Interpret SO WHAT?** Interpret the meaning of the information **Key words:** *paraphrase, restate, summarize, reword, explain, construe, clarify, give details, describe, represent*	**Practical Way** Apply the information in a practical, authentic way **Key words:** *implement, employ*	
CONCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE	**Abstract Information** Retrieve abstract knowledge **Key words:** *theory, theorem, classification, taxonomy, periods, laws, principles, generalization, relationships, understandings*	**Extrapolate NOW WHAT?** Extrapolate the information into another context **Key words:** *illustrate, model, exemplar, paradigm*	**Creative Way** Apply in a creative way **Key words:** *execute, relate, perform, stage*	
ASSESSMENT: EXAMPLES	Objective tests True/false Matching Fill in the blank Multiple choice Short answer One right answer Standardized tests Checklists Vocabulary recitations Q&A periods	Subject tests Open-ended questions Essays Constructed responses Selected responses Journals/reflections Short answer Q&A periods Discussions Oral reports Posters/displays/dioramas	Performances Re-creation of product Demonstrations/ presentations Games/ simulations Open-ended essays Experiments Projects Research reports	

4 Based on Anderson, Lorin W., and David R. Krathwohl, eds. *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.* New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 2001.

	ANALYZE	EVALUATE	CREATE
factual	**Individual Elements** Analyze the individual elements **Key words:** *observe, examine, survey, organize, find*	**Check Clarity** Check information for clarity **Key words:** *check, test, assess, question, evaluate, monitor*	**Reorganize** Reorganize elements of the original information **Key words:** *reorder, rearrange, restructure, change, alter, fashion, form, craft, generate*
procedural	**Relationship Among Elements** Analyze the relationship among elements **Key words:** *determine, establish, ascertain, differentiate, distinguish*	**Judge Accuracy** Judge information for accuracy **Key words:** *judge, ensure, confirm, review, authorize, decide*	**Formulate** Formulate designs for new uses for the information **Key words:** *design, devise, plan, express, articulate*
conceptual	**Principles Governing Elements** Analyze the principles that govern the elements **Key words:** *appraise, connect, dissect, probe*	**Critique Validity** Critique information for validity **Key words:** *critique, validate, verify, scrutinize*	**Innovate** Create innovative and original ideas or products **Key words:** *create new, produce, build, invent, deconstruct, originate, initiate*
	Compare/contrast charts Hierarchical diagrams Research reports/papers Essays Open-ended/subjective tests	Criterion-referenced assessments Surveys Research reports Experiments	Speeches/debates Research proposals Graphic representations Designs Research proposals Performance-based productions

CRAFT MATTERS FOR WRITING

1. Title & Opening (--On ramp) <> Closure (--Off Ramp)
2. Truth, Honesty, Consistency of the world created
   a. Generally and strictly in a Reductionist way:
      i. Poetry seeks/explores emotional truths
      ii. Fiction seeks/explores human truths
      iii. Nonfiction seeks/explores an individual's truths
      iv. Drama seeks/explores circumstantial truths
3. Form
4. Line-breaks <> Sentence Length
5. Syntax (word order)
   a. Simplistic –
   b. Varied
   c. Purposeful +
6. Punctuation
7. Imagery
8. Abstractions (--?)
9. Music / Noise / Sound Devices
10. Clichés / Banality(--)
11. Transitions: Leaps (+) / Stumbles (--)
12. Figurative Language
   a. Metaphor & Simile
   b. Flashback & Fast Forward
   c. Jargon & Idiom
   d. Imagery
   e. etc,...
13. More (--) or Less (--)
14. (Unearned) Sentimentality (--)
15. Show or Tell
16. Vocabulary (Diction)
17. Tone & Mood
18. Risk
19. Trust the Reader
20. Dialogue
21. Character
22. Twists & Turns, Pacing, Changes
23. Surprise+ / Shock— (Deus Ex Machina)
24. Setting(s)
25.

"Twenty-Two Poem Hacks" BY CARMEN GIMÉNEZ SMITH adapted&augmented

1. What would happen if you deleted that first stanza: The first stanza is often the path to a poem, and it provides scaffolding for us, but our reader doesn't need it as much as we do. Read the poem without the first stanza, and see how much is missing. Consider how quickly the first stanza situates the reader in the poem.

2. Balance your *image machines*: An image machine is made of words and creates sets of images for the reader/audience we create in a poem that makes our argument. A good image machine runs smoothly, but also makes an idea new. The elements of the image machine should be clear and lucid and dynamic.

3. Nouns and verbs, verbs and nouns: Whenever you look at a poem, the majority of the heavy lifting should be done by the primary building blocks of a clause. Are your nouns and verbs active and specific?

4. Best line: Every other moment in the poem should be able to hold its own in relation to the best line in the poem.

5. Appositive: The appositive is a noun or noun phrase that renames a noun besides it. Often, when we write a poem, we develop a set of images to describe something. If the use of the appositive is more of a multiple-choice strategy, rather than **deepening** and **complicating** the description, it should be cut.

6. Check word frequency: If we use a single word in a poem more than once, we've created a pattern (the same goes for entire books). Does the pattern create more meaning or create monotony?

7. Test your modifiers: Are they sharp enough, accurate enough? Are they descriptive, or abstract? A strong modifier should add texture to the thing it describes. If you can use a noun or verb that's more specific so that it doesn't require modification, then do that. **Economy is key.**

8. Assess your use of meta-cognitive handles: Language like "I feel," "I remember," "I think," etc. often points to the obvious work of cognition. We **rarely need** them, and more importantly, they offset the potential for a dynamic subject-verb engagement.

Remove them whenever possible, then move the subsequent language into the spotlight.

9. Choose the right point of view: Although poems are often written in the first person, a third person might serve a persona poem that doesn't ring authentic.

10. Vary your sentence patterns: Everything that a poem shares with music is enacted in the syntax. Repetition creates beautiful density, but can also wear on the reader's ear if attention isn't paid to how the sentence pattern repeats and/or how that repetition can be maximized. *(Un-lineate your poem--Write it out as prose sentences to check for varied word order).*

11. Check for dummy subjects: The constructions "there is" and "it is" give the predicating power to the "to be" verb. Poems that are idea-driven can often support that sort of predication (verb clause), but it's a good idea to make sure that the referent in that type of sentence can be readily identified and isn't abstract and unclear.

12. Articles: Do you have the right one? Are you using them when you can? Some poets consider the article a throwaway word, an easy source of economy, but they overlook the ways in which articles, like feminine endings in other languages, give our nouns texture and scope.

13. Clauses and fragments: Fragments can serve us well in a poem, but if we have a conventional clause (subject-predicate) divided by a period, we should ask why break up that engagement with energy and momentum.

14. Titles: Titles are the toughest thing we write, but they are often the most overlooked component in a poem. The title should be the first note the poem sounds and engage with some level of complexity that enhances the reader's relationship to the poem's subject matter.

15. I came, I saw, I conquered: <u>Parataxis</u> is a writing strategy of linking short simple sentences or clauses together. This can be hugely generative, but sometimes linking the information of two sentences, with either coordination or dependency, complicates the syntactical hierarchies in a poem. This is called hypotaxis. Either way, consider how connecting or disconnecting clauses might better serve the poem.

"Twenty-Two Poem Hacks" BY CARMEN GIMÉNEZ SMITH adapted&augmented

16. Lines: Read the poem from the bottom up to see how the lines sound. Reading them individually, they become units of sound and meaning.

17. Stanza type: A couplet does different rhetorical work than a quatrain, and as a poem changes in revision, a poet might occasionally reconsider how the stanza type supports a poem's ambition.

18. A punctuation plan: If you're not going to use commas, then don't use them consistently. Consider what the rhetoric of your punctuation announces to your reader.

19. Capitalization of proper nouns: Do it.

20. Out Loud: The poem has a sonic rhetoric that we don't hear when we read the poem in our head. Listen to the poem's musical reason and make sure nothing sounds tinny or awkward. You might not know the immediate fix, and it might require pushing the poem through a few more drafts, but you should make note where the poem's sound sticks in your craw. (Check for musicality by reading aloud in an accent).

21. Revise toward strangeness: The poem should make you uncomfortable and it should challenge you. "No surprise for the writer, no surprise for the reader." -Robert Frost

22. Move your last stanza to the beginning of the poem: A poem isn't just looking for one answer. In our work in a poem, we uncover lots of questions we might not have considered when we set out to write it in the first poem. Moving the last stanza to the top of a poem changes the terms of the poem's investigation.

23. Copy your poem into google translate and translate it into a second language, then a third and back to English. Look for new, different words and phrases. Use for any new ideas.

24. Force your poem into a sonnet or other rigid form. Allow the history or facts to change but not the emotional pulse or impulse of the poem.

25. Read your poem aloud. Put it down, turn the page, and rewrite from memory.

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26. Change the Speaker's POV. If you wrote in first person, change to second or third; If you wrote in the second person, change to first or third; and if you wrote in the third person, change to first or second POV.

27. Give it to a friend, classmate--who has not heard or read it--and ask them to read it aloud. Did they pause where you wouldn't have? Or stumble somewhere? How was their reading different from yours?

28. The best poems ask questions. Does your poem ask (implicitly or explicitly) more questions than it answers?

29. Poetry's subject matter is often abstract but uses concrete, palpable language to explore the poem's emotions and ideas. Are your nouns concrete and palpable? A house or an apartment is concrete and palpable, a home is an abstract idea.

30. Are your verbs in the present tense unless they absolutely must indicate a time other than the present?

31. Did you ground the reader somewhere within the title and first few lines? Setting is integral to ground the reader somewhere as she or he engages with the ideas and emotionality of the poem.

32. Demonstrative adjectives ('this, that, these,' and 'those') can create more intimacy and/or familiarity than mere articles: *a smoking gun* vs *this smoking gun* or *that smoking gun.*

Task with Creature Rationale Exemplar:

Icarus is literally and figuratively sophomoric, has a "science project/ with feathers" or "greasy wings" alluding to Icarus' infamous wax ones and comes from an island near Crete, and finally, Icarus flies away from society and its seemingly arbitrary rules. Placing Icarus in a sophomore classroom where students have "blue and orange / bangs . . . yanked down / midriff shirts" is a novel setting for him and hopefully demonstrates his impulsiveness and allows us to see that he is an intellectual inasmuch as he's already read and deeply analyzed Twain's classic novel, *Huck Finn*. Because there are three characters in this poem--four if we count his classmates--the "I" of the poem, Icarus, and to a lesser extent Huck Finn, I wonder if the teacher, Huck, and Icarus are one persona occupying three characters. Therefore, each one shows humanity, but their individual personas are a result of their different settings and expectations. (148 words)

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Proficient (3)	Developing (2)	Needs (1)
Creature's Persona & Voice	The poem fully reinvents a distinct and vivid creature with a unique and consistent voice/tone.	The creature's persona establishes a clear, mostly consistent voice/tone and perspective.	The creature is somewhat recognizable and/or voice/tone may be inconsistent or unclear.	Vague and unclear, inconsistent voice/tone.
Perspective & Insight	The creature's augmentated persona creates new ideas, realities, conceptions for its canon, mythos.	The poem verifies the creature's persona, but its additions to the canon are undeveloped & unbelievable.	The poem establishes the creature's persona. Nothing is added to its lore.	The creature's persona is nebulous and appears static. Lore is irrelevant.
Imagery & Language	Vivid imagery and strong word choices alter the creature **and** build its persona.	Vivid imagery and strong word choices maintain the creature.	Language is vague, trite, cliche; imagery is barely present, lacks specificity.	Weak or little imagery; language is vague or generic.
Setting	The setting builds cohesive, vivid scenes and enhances the creature's lore.	The setting establishes scenes--some are vivid, but they are not cohesive and the creature's lore.	The setting retells known details.	The setting is unclear, missing, or does not connect to the poem's meaning.
Structure & Form	The stanzas and line breaks articulate the poem's meaning or essence and initiate a unique paradigm.	The stanzas and line breaks connect to the poem's meaning or essence.	The structure is inconsistent or does not fully support the content.	The poem lacks clear structure or form.
Mechanics, Grammar, & Tone	The poem is nearly error free.	Minor errors that may distract from Meaning or Essence.	Several errors that may distract from understanding.	Frequent errors that make the poem difficult to read.
Augments Canon, Myth, or Lore	The entire poem creates, produces, and initiates new ideas of the existing myth.	Part of the poem creates, produces, or initiates new ideas of the existing myth.	The poem connects to the original lore.	The poem does not engage with the existing myth, lore, or history of the creature.