

Wife Poems

by [Carl Nelson](#) (July 2020)



Wife Poem #75

Jabberwocky

I made my wife late for work
reading a favorite passage
from Fernando Pessoa, the poet,
about shadows of hanging shirts.

I think she lost track of time
trying to keep track of what I was saying.
“Just tell the boss, your husband distracted you,” I said,
kissing her as the car rolled away.

“I’ve got to go,” she replied, abstracted,
as the car rolled away.

The haughty flights of words,
the slow journey of passivity,
this möbius strip of thought patterns

far beyond the commute of regular speech—
have you found it to stress others a bit?

My wife said in grade school, she suffered panic attacks
when forced to discuss “Jabberwocky”
until she could tell them what it meant.
It was like being waterboarded, I imagine.

It’s probably inhumane to produce poetry.
And like Sarin gas, it should probably be a crime
to possess the stuff.
But like Syria, I hate to surrender my stores.
Poems run a cruel tyranny, but
there is no better way to describe the world.

Wife Poem #17

Purposeful

She is much more focused than I.
She might want something to happen,

but I just stare
while she undresses.

She is more purposeful.

She attends Church,
studies the Bible,
and helps with the Sunday Service Luncheon.
While I just wonder, what will happen to me?

She prays for a reason.

I try it just to see who's listening,
what's biting—as if I'm going fishing—
and to be respectful.

Patience and faith interest me.

While she likes to consider things of more immediacy
like my immortal soul, if I were to die tomorrow.

“There's something to worry about,” she says.

“I shall add it to my list.” I nod.

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Carl Nelson has recently published his newest Self Help Book, *The Poet's (30 Year) Marriage Plan*, which is a useful collection of interlarded poems and prose advice (schemes), all celebrating the hallowed institution of marriage. To learn more about the author and peruse his work, please visit