Bougainvillea

The simple things.
The simple life.
Can we buy one? Can we give it time?
The yard is sunny, on top of a hill. I’m amazed.
Don’t worry. The sun makes heat.
The little flowers that need shade will not thrive here.
The deep pink gash, thrash, stainless beauty of the bougainvillea will survive.
Bloom and rebloom all year. Thorns along the side.
The petals fall into the kelly-green grass, into the clear clean glass-green water of the pool onto the warm cement. Lie down there. And the wind throws the petals all through the air.
They turn pink-to-brown under the rake.
Maybe you were alive someplace, in the East.
But this is not the East. Don’t bring it around here.
Neighbors in Their Own Bunkers

The man in his bunker lets no one in
So the NOT TRESPASSING sign is a given
On the high fence, with the curly barbed wire.
The gun rack, you guess, is not hidden,
Because you’ve never been inside to see it
and you will never, in a million years, go in.
Those family members who come out from their shrouds on occasion
look dazed by the sunlight.

Yet the smiling face of the Buddha
—(the man around the block, not a real prophet)
hides inside his sheepskins and his reputation
Even what he says is not what he says

Even what he does is not what he does.
The face is open and the house is open
And the collection displayed during the parties for four hundred
for the hospital and the children’s orchestra. “Welcome.”

The bunker, the bunker.
Lets no one in.
Lets no one see the wet oil stain.
Lets no one see the addendum.
How Could We Decorate a Haunted House?

These streets like a clogged cochlea
Low and deep and the houses follow up a narrow steep

Inside the haunted house the man sits and fills the whole room.
His sad and defeated drinking perfumes off his belly
His cigarettes and his ponytail
His rolls of fat, his bag of nachos
And the nervous woman in the kitchen
Greeting us, hello, to walk through this place at 6:45 in the morning
They want to sell—

Nearly hitting our heads—

The flocked wallpaper from a cocktail hour
A vista over the valley, though the traffic swirls up too loudly—
Like a nasty acrid smell
Wouldn’t have been that way when it was built, when it was in fashion
And no one updated the appliances in all those years;
Door handles have fallen off, the wood paneling punched like a loud yell.

A guest with a prosthetic left leg swivels in his swivel chair to look at us
Highball glass in hand
Down the valley, lights across the land.
She was
The date of this available gentleman.
Now she is dead, the view of the town.
Nothing left: no furniture, no sweet satin nightgown.