Litanies and Reiterations

Dylan Kinnett

First Edition.

© 2015 Dylan Kinnett.

http://nocategories.net

Contents

Apostrophe	01
Believe It or Not.	02
Be Sure	04
You Do Know, Don't You?	05
A Live Studio Audience	06
Four Years Closer	08
Love Is on the Radio	10
Easier Said Than Done	12
I'm Sorry It's Been a While	13
Notes.	15

Epigraphs

"Isn't life a series of images that change as they repeat themselves?"

— Andy Warhol

"No time for poetry but exactly what is"

— Jack Kerouac

"There is no such thing as repetition. Only insistence."

— Gertrude Stein

"to repeat, monotonously, some common word, until the sound, by dint of frequent repetition, ceased to convey any idea whatever to the mind"

— Е.А. Poe

"Manners first, then conversation."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Apostrophe

```
O Holy heart,
This is my rendering of
your mild exhortations
to see with patience:
```

First,

observe the greatest portion of this reflection.

First,

observe the over-mind of nature that binds the race of mankind.

First.

observe the light that blinds.

In this pawnshop of a universe things are arranged or exchanged not destroyed.

All the things on the shelf they know: this is a limited-time offer.

Know this

instead of sorrow.

Believe It or Not

Half-truth, generality, paraphrase, innuendo, rumor, hearsay, heresy, bestrecollection, secondary source, speculation, word on the street, testimonial,
sources who decline to be named, exaggeration, sources whose identifying
information has been redacted for purposes the statement of which has been
redacted for reasons classified, statistical tendency, allegation, guesswork,
uncorroborated witness accounts

...all that: let's give it a name like "believe it or not."

Believe it or not, these are medicine:

snake oils, the application of leeches, worm pills, invigorators, elixirs, electuaries, tinctures, pills, plasters, poultices, patent medicines, aphrodisiacs.

Here are some colorful examples:

Lung Balm
Bromo-Seltzer
Burdock Blood Bitters
Boroleum Ointment
Dr. Burkhart's Vegetable Compound
Bateman's Pectoral Drops
Hooper's Female Pills
Carter's Little Liver Pills
Dr. Shoop's Restorative Nerve Pills
Sherman's Worm Lozenges

You are encouraged to try one of those but you should be advised that side effects may include: headache (for which, incidentally, see above); severe nausea, vomiting, or stomach pain; upset stomach, heartburn; drowsiness; headache; fever lasting longer than 3 days; swelling; pain lasting longer than 10 days; hearing problems; ringing in your ears; black, bloody, or tarry stools; or coughing up blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds.

Those are all things that might happen; they probably won't happen but they might happen. To continue, these are some more things you can believe, or not:

There is a global conspiracy to make people eat their vegetables; green M&M candies encourage sexual activity; the "Russian woodpecker" over—the—horizon radar signals heard on shortwave radio are actually a mind control experiment from which you can protect your brain by wearing tin—foil on your head or by wearing (insert non—headwear item here) on your head; the election at (insert time and place here) was rigged by (insert responsible party here); there's something sinister that they are not telling us about (insert historical event here).

Where "believe it or not" is concerned, you can (insert anything you like) in place of "it" because we believe that you are free to believe or to not believe whatever—the-hell-you-damn-well-please. We *could* not believe this. This hasn't always been a popular belief, but we believe this now, some of us, not all the time, still, we believe

but how are we to know?

How are we to be sure?

Be Sure

Be sure

Be sure to think about your dreams and their meaning Be sure to zip up your pants if you leave the house Be sure to plan the seating arrangements carefully Be sure to enjoy experiences you never would have Be sure to go outdoors once in a while in winter Be sure to take the keys before locking the car Be sure to play the game at maximum difficulty Be sure to check the potting soil for wetness Be sure to expect a response within 48 hours Be sure to watch for her celebrity comeback Be sure to ask your waitress about dessert Be sure to watch the thrilling conclusion Be sure to have enough fuel for the trip Be sure to wear proper safety equipment Be sure to pack an extra pair of socks Be sure to proofread your application Be sure to wear flowers in your hair Be sure to do objective fact-checks Be sure to make reservations early Be sure to watch the next episode Be sure to request a window seat Be sure to tie the knot tightly Be sure to check the batteries Be sure to take your medicine Be sure to back up your data Be sure to listen carefully Be sure to get enough rest Be sure to drink Ovaltine Be sure to watch it live Be sure to ride a train Be sure to use muscles Be sure to stand tall Be sure to be social Be sure to eat well Be sure to lock up Be sure to behave Be sure to share Be sure to vote Be sure to see Be sure to

You Do Know, Don't You?

You do Don't you? You do know Don't you? You do know that Don't you? You do know I'm joking Don't you? You do know it's racist Don't you? You do know he's a fraud Don't you? You do know they are rich Don't you? You do know pride is a sin Don't you? You do know you're pregnant Don't you? You do know axed means fired Don't you? You do know that is expensive Don't you? You do know zombies aren't real Don't you? You do know patience is a virtue Don't you? You do know you sound very stupid Don't you? You do know women are human beings Don't you? You do know you're a complete wanker Don't you? You do know carcinogens cause disease Don't you? You do know how ridiculous that sounds Don't you? You do know you're begging the question Don't you? You do know the people on television can't hear you Don't you?

A Live Studio Audience

You make us laugh

Workplace situation comedy, you make us laugh Animated comedy, you make us laugh Ethnic situation comedy, you make us laugh Satirical news programs, you make us laugh Family situation comedy, you make us laugh Absurd comedy television, you make us laugh Sketch comedy television, you make us laugh Reality television comedy, you make us laugh Romantic situation comedy, you make us laugh Domestic situation comedy, you make us laugh Improvised situation comedy, you make us laugh

We laugh at your jokes

Fat Albert, we laugh at your jokes
I Dream of Jeannie, we laugh at your jokes
Gilligan's Island, we laugh at your jokes
Mister Ed, we laugh at your jokes
Inspector Gadget, we laugh at your jokes
Tonight Show, we laugh at your jokes
Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson, we laugh at your jokes
Tonight Show with Jay Leno, we laugh at your jokes
Tonight Show with Conan O'Brien, we laugh at your jokes
Late Show, we laugh at your jokes
The Late Late Show, we laugh at your jokes

You make us laugh You make us laugh You make us laugh You make us laugh

We laugh at your jokes We laugh at your jokes We laugh at your jokes We laugh at your jokes

We laugh We laugh We laugh We laugh

Four Years Closer

We're four years closer to the day when our enemies will have the bomb. We're four years closer to the end of the world. We're four years further away from the beginning of the world than we were four years ago. We're four years closer to the day the sun will exhaust its fuel, speaking of atomic energy, and on that day, a day we're now four years closer to, on that day the sun will swallow the earth. We're also four years closer to a sustainable future. We're four years closer to my fortieth birthday, my forty-fourth birthday, and four years closer to the day that I will die. We're four years further away from the day I slipped and fell on the playground and skinned up my leg. Four years later, there was a scar there. Many years later, I can't see that scar anymore. We're four years closer to the year 2052. We're four years closer to flying cars, to men on mars, drinkless bars, harvesting the stars, artificially intelligent avatars, the war to end all wars. We're four years closer to the largest population ever recorded on Earth. We're four years closer to a larger national debt, not the deficit, the debt. We're four years closer to the last time you'll ever eat ice cream. We're four years closer to the death of the oldest tree in the city of Baltimore. We're four years closer to the extinction of another species. We're four years closer to the exhaustion of all the petroleum, all the iron, the wood, water, copper, tin, nickel, sulphur, diamonds, emeralds, rubies, laughter, clay, oxygen, ice, snowball fights, elbow room, landscapes without billboards, sandalwood extract, cork, blue corn and all the other shit we'll have less of in four years. We're four years closer to retirement.

We're four years closer to paying our student loans, our medical bills, our mortgages, our credit card bills, our car payments, our insurance, but in for years we'll still be paying for cable, internet, cell phone data plans, gasoline, insurance payments, taxes, taxes. We can't tax or save our way out of this one. Time to pony up! Maybe in four years we'll pony up. We're four years closer to four years from now when we'll pony up. We'll pony up then. Pick another date we're four years closer to. We're ten years closer, too. We're twenty years closer. Those of us who have been on this rock long enough are fifty, sixty maybe even seventy years closer to that date. We're ten thousand years closer to ten thousand years from now than we were ten thousand years ago. We're four years closer to being further from the beginning.

Every day begins a period that will end in a thousand years, just as each day is the end of an age that began that long ago. Why make distinctions? Time is not against us; it is only our perception of its end that fills us with dread.

Love Is on the Radio

Love is beginning now Love is barely dressed Love is a bit out of phase

Love is a mind confused

Love is a rose but you better not pick it

Love is a mystery

Love is actually helping or hindering

Love is stronger than pride

Love is only for the lucky and the strong

Love is a twelve-bar blues

Love is your love

Love is the light of the world

Love is an open door

Love is a heart abused

Love is lost, and lost is love

Love is all you need

Love is a mine of gold

Love is its own reward

Love is my drug

Love is a morning song

Love is dangerous

Love is it can make you laugh

Love is I want you to show me

Love is like a red, red rose

Love is tragedy

Love is blindness

Love is like oxygen

Love is your blue suede shoes

Love is a steel quitar

Love is on the way

Love is a river

Love is a red dress well hang me in rags

Love is a drowning soul

Love is enough to light up the darkness

Love is a miracle Love is here with me Love is watching you go Love is one way no way Love is king Love is calling Love is beautiful Love is a losing game Love is a battle scar Love is a many-splendored thing Love is stronger than justice Love is still a band of gold Love is a bourgeois construct Love is made of something Love is the pleasures I'm told Love is relentless Love is a shiny car Love is like an antidote Love is misplaced

Easier Said Than Done

The total conversion of matter into energy is theoretically possible by throwing matter into a black hole, thus consuming the matter and emitting heat, which could be used to generate power.

Easier said than done.

That two bodies should occupy the same place, that the sun should recede or stand still, something that nature can do, but not in the same order, something that nature cannot do.

Fasier said than done.

The holy man was put to death for his holiness, death by beheading, martyred. Death in an instant. A profusion of blood. A woman wept and kept some blood in a vial, held carefully, ages through ages, blood to dust.

Dust to blood. Dust to blood!

The vial is presented to the gathered mass and held aloft for all to see, full of dust, but with time, patience and belief, the dust becomes blood. Liquefaction and rejoicing. The dust is blood.

Easier said than done.

The void colony of Roanoke left its houses. The cries of the baby girl could not be heard. Management had been delayed by other significant priorities. A carving, on a tree, of the name of an island. The cries of the baby girl could not be heard. Management set out to travel to that island, during a hurricane.

Easier said than done.

A golden city at the heart of a golden kingdom at the heart of a golden empire, ruled by a king, adorned in gold, riding the wind across the lake, in a golden raft laden with gold, bearing gold offerings to the golden god of the lake. The gold sinks, slowly, down, below the surface of the water, beyond the light of the sun. Gold is not gold in the darkness. It sinks into the darkness inhabited by the god of gold in the darkness, to the city there in that lake, the city of El Dorado. The city is marked on a map. The map is the guide. The map is published and easy to read. Famous men and noble men have read the map. The map clearly indicates the location of the City of El Dorado, the source of all that gold.

Easier said than done.

I'm Sorry It's Been a While but You Know How It Is...

When you're too busy being happy tying ties and shoelaces waiting in line at the pharmacy

When you're too busy being happy wondering whether there will be parking available having the perennial argument but not argument about what's for dinner sorting the junk mail from the good stuff

When you're too busy being happy defrosting the freezer adjusting the thermostat

When you're too busy being happy buying things on sale smelling the milk in the middle of the night for signs of its age looking for the remote

When you're too busy being happy executing commands like: select, copy, paste, select, cut, undo

When you're too busy being happy cleaning out old boxes in the closet wondering whether today's interest rate is a better interest rate removing the dust that collects

When you're too busy being happy brushing twice and flossing pairing the socks

When you're too busy being happy blocking out life for work blocking out work for life answering the phone, sometimes

When you're too busy being happy using television to look at the sky arriving simultaneously at a four-way stop

Notes

Believe It or Not

The list of 19th Century patent medicines was sampled from a catalogue of the Smithsonian's collection. As with many of these poems, the key phrase is a commonplace one.

Be Sure

These lines are a mixture of found examples, paraphrases, and imagined examples of the phrase.

You Do Know, Don't You?

These lines are sampled from real conversations.

Love Is on the Radio

The phrase "love is" occurs frequently in the lyrics of popular songs. These lines are all examples from an inexhaustible supply.

Easier Said than Done

In some religious settings, a litany is a text or incantation with two parts: "versus," recited by one person and the "responsum," intoned by the people gathered. This piece has a similar structure.