

David Plumb

August 23-Saturday

The teenager says, "When I'm with my friends, I'm not a real person, but when I'm on line..." If you say it, you make it so. Or bend the adjective, verb, noun, to a nightly swarth of TV Tee Hees and I caught you naked. Are you, you?" America buys elixirs, salves, pills, anything to wash, rub or drown the bleak highways at 23% interest and climbing. It's one fat casino. Even grandma leaves the kids in the car.

Hurricane season. Tropical Storm Fay swamps Florida. Fannie Mae in the bucket. Get banged at the pump. The Northeast boasts early cold..."Change." In the wings. Biden for Obama, yarmulke on tap with hosts of flag waving peddlers to follow. The Olympics stream on. Jamaica stomps the track. China winks (is she 14?). Star shells for MacDonald's and Visa. America drops the baton twice.

Who dances on the Moon? Which crank knocks at the door? Who slips on the White House floor this time? Bombs for Jesus? Photo IDs at the cemetery? What's the catch?

Back from the Pharmacy.

I open the bottle. I swallow.
I am cured of insignificance.
I am awash in anomaly.
I rejoice. I pay homage.
I am just too much.

101st Plasmatic Extravaganza

In the blink of America, in the belly of Saudi Arabia
on the spine of China and Pakistan and Sudan
a day of magnificent explosions get sold in cracker jack boxes.
Toys, and necklaces and underwear flap everywhere
Digital cookies wrapped in tasty chocolate blowups
kill fish and babies and grownups and goats and chickens.
They kill the sky. It's a Fourth of July Thanksgiving
when everyone has their head up a turkey butt.

Johnny Upton steps on a Baghdad bomb in Rudyard Kipling's Afghanistan
and the country makes Super Bowl dressing, a celebration of bowed heads
green peas and marshmallows on sweet potato pie.
Guns echo on the plasma screen, the teams take the field.
The pretty girls wag their rumps, beer froths in Paradise
and all over everywhere, purple mountains majestically
watch the clicking, clacking, babbling, flickering game

Somewhere in Texas an Attwater Prairie Chicken scratches for a mate.
Somewhere near Tuba City, Arizona, a pickup truck races to a plate of Indian fried bread.
Somewhere in Florida, Bacardi the nine foot alligator chokes to death on a plastic turtle.
Somewhere the President wears jeans and smirks.
Somewhere the Vice President hides in his fat listening to
his private heart machine beat him alive.

A thousand elephants with crosses tacked to their sides
and butterfly wings clipped to their ears march out of the sky.
Mexicans and Puerto Ricans and Dominicans and Haitians
stand in line for the next trolley, the next truck or boat
the next something and somewhere in Chiapas, a Zapatista
cuts and pastes Lacandon history with a laptop.
America's bugles hoot the alleys, the shopping malls
the empty schoolyards and the parking lots.

Movie stars wearing flashing teeth and short skirts wail
cross-eyed songs in the Forget You Night. Flags flap
in the bombed out brains of soldiers eating crow.
Babies screech, mothers scream and wives stand
at blank windows staring into emptiness.
A philanthropist mail-orders nine hundred dollar caskets from Costco
with "He Didn't Get It," printed on the lids.

Priests Hail Mary on her way to Dubai for a facelift.
Jesus takes a good room overlooking the sea. Rabbis rally.
Mid East kings sell slick promises of BEST Buy
in a Black Box with whores in the backroom on Sunday.
A man marries his dog in India and Minnesota
opens five Bed and Breakfasts for single canines.

When all the announcements are made,
all the prayers whispered, all the turkey stuffed in all the craws
and all the butchers close their cash registers
and all the pundits choke on the babble in their throats
and all the pretty girls jump all the pretty boys
and all the slot machines stop at strawberries and 7
and all the Easter Bunnies die waiting for Jesus.
and all the monkeys hang from their cages waiting for somebody
somewhere to speak up about something besides Freedom
Democracy and Terror, the immortal screen flashes MORE!