

EX POST FACTO

The baker's upstairs
delivering bread from
the ovens. Next he will

swallow cats. He will re-create
in pastry the turning point
of the Russian Revolution.

Lately, he's been magnificent.
The cobwebs taste better. He's
been punching down my

bulging eyes. If I always feel
a piece of hair on the tip of my tongue,
it's to remind me of what is forgotten.

Rain never forgets the river, but
always wants to be buried in
the overalls dropped silently over the side.

CONCORDANCE

An understanding of the past has set us back:
In our terraplane, throttle wild, what we see

Is what was dead. The spearhead flying in our minds
Retreats from the open field to the sepulcher where

The flowers planted take on their own life just once,
Show their life as single notes of an English horn

That is planted in our minds in a different,
An abstract way. Music, especially sepulcher music,

Is abstract and ordinary. The lichen covers the grave-
Stones like words cover a page. We read them like

First graders, balancing the mystery on the tip
Of our fingers: what we can pronounce is ours. What

We cannot, we pass to the one behind us, a process of
Extremes, small but opposite. An *avocet* is hardly

An extreme of a *pelican*: neither is musical except for
Their names. One has a needle-beak, the other a mailpouch.

They are everything birds can be in their present moments.
Their pasts might tell them to: ignore the albatross,

Avoid loud parties and some Italian mussels, follow
Out to sea any promising rusty barges. In the sand,

We are the terrible children playing with our whizzbangs.
When in doubt we look up, look down, smile, or hold on.

We have little in relation to these birds except the past,
A symbol on our tombstones, a wing slicing a piece of sky.

On our own private beaches, which we inexplicably share,
If we must pass notes to each other, let them be musical.

HABLAR, APRENDER, VIVIR

If I said there's a guarantee
The wash will dry in the sun

Today, the words were learned
Words, like promises of new