

Armine Iknadossian

United States of Love

We don't say
I am on love.
We say I am in love.
Not I am with love
like one would say I am with child.
Or I am under, over, next to love.
You cannot be inside or outside love either.
But you can fall in or out of it.
You can be loveless but not lovefull.
You can be loving and loveable,
unloved, lovelorn, lovesick.

I once fell in love with a film director
but never a love director. A love detector,
on the other hand, sounds like a good idea.
Or a love investigator who gets to the bottom of things
for a nominal fee. There is no such thing
as a love star, although rock stars
are known to get so much love
they throw some of it away.

How I wish I could have my very own
love jockey or, even better, a personal lover
instead of a personal trainer.
And instead of being an overeducated
and underpaid associate professor,
why not be an associate lover
or, even better, a dean of love.
I personally think we need more
love officers than police officers,
and although fire-fighters are, well,
lovely, I would feel much better

marrying a handsome love fighter
or a love mechanic.

And, it's quite a shame that all Americans
do not have love insurance or
even love security for that matter.

Dog walkers are necessary,
but what would a love walker do exactly?

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Or a love-stylist? A love designer?
If only we could replace traffic citations
with love tickets, demanding
that one be more affectionate with one's children.

If only there was a love meter you had to feed
every hour, or a love-station where
trains are never on time
and nobody cares because they're
all listening to their love-pods or
updating their status on Lovebook.

Serial lovers! What a grand idea!
Or a correctional lover
who carries a lovestick
and a lovelight everywhere she goes.
If I could, I would be a taxi-cab lover
or a love-guide on a double-decker love bus
in Manhattan, pointing out
where the Battle of Love was fought
and how the man-made miracle
that is Central Love was built,
and where John Lennon was almost loved to death.

Somebody's Done For

We have bizarre ideas
to keep ourselves from death:

Tea leaves and rosaries,
astrologers and numeraries.

I keep my jewels hidden
in the broom-closet.

You hang your mother's
crucifix from our bedpost.

We have two rottweilers
like gendarmes in the front yard.

After work we sit on the porch
with all the house lights on.

We still believe we can outrun it,
believe in God's law and miracles,

even as the sun drags a bloody gown behind her.