

Madrid: 1962

gay reds of the bull ring
reflected in wines sun
& lottery tickets
pinned to jackets
festive fluttering rags

& in the streets
a joy and fear possible only
where cigarets are sold singly

the warning of urine in the streets

To Monica Durrell, Daughter

Read you nursery rhymes girl?
We live them.
See Mummy out fetching faggots;
See brother Moss in the corner
With his spider, eating sugarless
Curds and whey. Our cupboard bare
But for city mice, and the cat
Is off to London today.

A wolf huffs at our house,
Which grinds and leans; we lean.
These are lean years, and already
With two we have so many children
We don't know what to do
Nor is there a shoe
In the house worth living in.

And that crooked man who walks
The crooked path (of life),
Wandering and weaving when he
Should walk straight, is your
Daddy (bless him!).

Read you nursery rhymes girl?
I write them.
And from this what will be your
Legacy: nuts, burrs, marbles
Hard as life
Or sen-sen sweet as hope.

— Albert Drake

Eugene, Oregon