

in a suburb, or she might not.  
she's not rich, but she could  
afford to move. probably she'd rather  
save the money for my grandkids — she  
had no children of her own. i don't  
tell her to move; i don't tell her not  
to. if i were a betting man, i'd  
wager she'll stay put.

#### GOOD NEIGHBOR PETE

twice a week my neighbor saves  
all of us on the street from sweeper tickets.  
when i hear my doorbell ring  
at noon on a thursday  
i know i've forgotten to move my car  
to the other side of the street.  
when it rings on friday, i know  
i've forgotten to move it back.  
i rush out in my stocking feet  
to save myself the fine.  
up and down the street  
others are doing the same.  
i tell pete i'd sooner put a match  
to a twenty dollar bill  
than contribute another cent to the city.  
and nowadays the meter maids of both sexes  
will write you up from a distance  
as long as they can read your license plate  
even if you're in the act  
of moving your car,  
and naturally the one thing the state  
is doing better is making  
the license plates more visible.

pete is retired but it's not as if  
he doesn't have plenty to keep him busy,  
including seemingly dozens of kids and grandkids,  
not to mention the inevitable jobs around  
the house and yard and garage  
that he's good at and i'm not.  
it's just that he also believes  
in being a good neighbor.  
if that's a middle-class, republican value,  
i hope it spreads to other factions as well.

— Gerald Locklin

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