

David K. Weiser
Poems (darker)
from [Ladders](#)

006. I reviewed all my decisions,
Lining them up in the yard,
But they would not stand still.

They raced in all directions,
Bumping and tripping each other,
And many fights broke out.

The drill turned into chaos
Marked by desperate screams:
“Please make up your mind!”

027. Being a bystander
In the accidents of life,
I offer testimony.

But no one wants to hear:
The judges have retired,
The police do not respond.

I see the poor exploited,
And the fatherless so lost.
They too will not believe me.

042. Minor disappointments
Will accumulate
Until a tear drips down.

Half-forgotten words
Out of a stale debate
Haunt the mind’s old house.

Like a mosquito bite,
Tiny stings of hate
Keep us up at night.

050. The smart machines that talk
Diminish human speech
To ugly shrieks and grunts.

The streets themselves are snarling
And curse the avenues.
They clash at every corner,

While children dumb as fish
Glide into pure silence
Where parents cannot go.

063. A man who cannot smile
(Although he sometimes tries)
Will never feel at ease.

Memory interferes
By retrieving mirth
Out of the buried past.

Polite, considerate
Of those who have not suffered,
He thinks of his fallen son.

065. Does life deprecate
Among the multitudes
Swarming the crowded streets?

What is a person worth
When a million others
Vie to take his place?

Great urban density
Cheaps the human soul.
It feels expendable.

069. Decadence of the mouth
Corrupts the purest soul.
The palate grows too fine

For ordinary food.
The lips begin to smirk
About the middle class.

Soon the curses flow
From liberated tongues,
Denying right and wrong.

101. In a land of many rivers
We worked the fertile soil
And reaped a hundredfold.

The earth gave precious grain
And multiplied our flocks;
Our wives wore chains of gold.

Yet all these gains brought loss:
Our children did not need us
Or the birthright that they sold.

104. I found a moderate leopard
Willing to change his spots,
But not all of them.

Peace is a gradual process
But dialogue has started,
Increasing confidence.

I told the leopard's neighbors
They'd live in peace someday
When grasses are his prey.

111. Because you dissect the Word,
Slicing its letters and sounds,
You reduce it to thin air.

Because you disassemble
The palace of good reason,
You sit on a pile of stones.

Deadly analysis,
The scalpel that you wield
Will someday slash your throat.

114. An uncommitted mind
Flits like a butterfly
Among the painted flowers.

Dizzy with distraction,
It flutters to the ground
Upon exhausted wings.

It has no hive, no honey,
No solid wax of faith
To shape into a cause.

123. Who erased the blackboard?
Some names have disappeared;
We won't see them again.

When teacher took attendance,
Not everyone said "Here."
Where are the absentees?

Some of us have transferred
To another school,
And they are doing well.

138. "The media mess us up,
Walking around like zombies,
Poisoned through the ears.

The media make their millions
By fracking through our brains,
Extracting the black gold.

Don't ask us to fight back.
We don't have many friends,
Just Mom, and she's at work."

153. Where branches have been cut
Knots in the wood remain,
Dark spots against the grain.

Where skin was cut and opened
Till the body slowly healed
Is by a scar revealed.

So we who long have grieved
Cannot conceal the blemish
Of suffering relieved.

171. We are playing word games
That nobody can win,
Except the words themselves.

They hold us hostage
In riddles of existence
Whose answer must be silence.

They have set a ransom
That nobody can pay,
Except with our lives.

174. Comfortable victims

Complain about their parents
And the troubles of this world.

They search for underdogs
For whom they can be sorry
As much as for themselves.

They meet to demonstrate
Against reality
And smoke the mellow weed.

213. The shredder frightens me;

I fear my memories
Will turn into confetti.

The little blades revolve
Somewhere in my brain:
What was your name again?

I stretch out my arms
But cannot touch the word
That I am searching for.

231. The “best minds” don’t go crazy.

Sounds good, but still a lie;
It’s the worst minds every time.

Fess up, howling beatnik:
The booze, the drugs, the queers --
Could they bestow a vision?

Enough that they made you famous
For more than fifteen minutes.
Then they helped you die.

236. Shabbat in Tel-Aviv:
The motorcycles roar
And people jog with dogs.

Others just sit and smoke
And watch me as I walk
Towards the synagogue.

How long, O Lord, how long
Will we ignore the Law
And think we do no wrong?

264. “Check it out,” he shouts,
The hustler with loaded dice,
Lurking on the corner.

“Here’s a guy who won,”
Pointing to his buddy
Whose fist is full of cash.

And all of us will play
The only game in town,
Global Economy.

294. An old and wrinkled hand
Lifts up a spoon for me.
Could such a hand be mine?

I recognize some dots,
And the pattern of those veins
I think I’ve seen before.

I know there’s no one here
To feed me cereal,
And yet I can’t be sure.

