


## Fucking Poetry Exercise

Fucked if you do and fucked if you don't. Here is a poetry exercise based on the Stephen Collis poem "Fucking Poetry." The poem:

### Fucking Poetry



Fucking poetry  
I have given you everything  
The ache of each arcing  
Curl slash and curve of letter form  
Forming words from mere sounds  
As round and round anxiety you whispered  
More and more anxious  
Go you are healed  
You are free  
Go

Fucking poetry  
And where are we now?  
In the long silence of not reading  
We create in our writing minds texting  
Nothing but invisible wind bodied forth  
In outflung boughs of electric currents  
I'm a sucker forever for the wallflower  
For paths diverging in snowy woods  
And the sharp cry of the kildeer  
The merest whisper  
You are poetry  
Fucking poetry

Fucking poetry

Even in the apocalypse  
You are writing me  
Because this is what we  
Did the last apocalypse too  
Singing into the fires which kept  
Some few remaining coals glowing  
Long into the aftermath  
The shattered night we  
Sing through and so  
We go on singing  
Because we are  
Poetry too and  
This is all we have  
Poetry fucking  
Poetry



Notice that every stanza repeats the title and it may be something you do. Give your mind a rest for a moment before you launch in to the next admission, or diatribe, the next love or hate, the next... whatever. If you are called to write poetry, surely you have these binaries of

publish/don't publish  
submit/wait for someone to ask you for work  
be free of outside validation/do readings, get books published &c.

Surely there is a need to sing in this algorithm-dominated anthropocene. It's likely needed now more than ever and yet there are those who believe AI can generate our songs, our poems, our culture. AI is a plagiarism machine, but don't expect to see that quote come up in a web search.

What can't AI generate? Your personal mythology and the luminous details of your personal mythology. That is why a Personal Universe Deck

is such a tool for maintaining some sense of self as the machines attempt to take over everything. That Barry McKinnon believed that each poem you write should be a summation of life up until that point can't be expressed by an algorithm. That Phyllis Webb said that the best response to a poem is another poem is not something a computer would have articulated.

AI can't generate the specifics of this particular Dharma Position. The weather of this particular moment. The politics of this particular moment. The items that make up the "still life" of your life right now, medications, particular fruits, items on your ofrenda, trees and birds outside your window. Jack Kerouac put it bluntly:

Those birds sitting  
out there on the fence -  
They're all going to die.

But before this moment dies, there are good reasons and bad reasons for you to continue your practice of poetry. Yes, this is either an opportunity for a Cover Poem, or you might have a sense of where this can go just by reading the title and taking off. Note the allusions to Ginsberg and other poets. Can you add those flourishes?

peN  
12:04pm  
19-MAR-2025  
Casa del Colibrí



## Work Cited:

Collis, Stephan, "Fuck Poetry" from *Cascadian Zen Volume II*, Watershed Press, 2024, Seattle, WA

<https://paulenelson.com/workshops/personal-universe-deck/>

<https://www.lionsroar.com/dogen-4-key-teachings/>

<https://paulenelson.com/workshops/cover-poem-rewrite-new-arrangement/>

