RAIN

Carl Lahser

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**1**

**If We Didn’t Need the Rain….**

If we didn’t need the rain I’d be mad.

Wet laundry is out hanging on the line

getting wetter if possible.

Well, I guess I can at least

take my duck for a walk.

My son is out in the yard in his briefs

with rain boots and an umbrella

stomping puddles

and saving drowning earthworms.

The stinking wet dog came charging in

and shook muddy water

all over the kitchen floor.

My hair is hanging.

Just hanging without a trace of a curl.

If we didn’t need the rain I’d be mad. Carl 9feb2012

# It Aint Gonna Rain in Gila Bend

## At 5 AM the temperature is 68.

## Relative humidity is 8%.

## Dew point is a minus 10.

## Aint gonna rain today.

Carl 190202

## **2**

**GROUND FOG AT DEL RIO**

Hilltops float darkly

on a sea of white ground fog

disconnected

from the rest of the earth

Brush and trees

fade into the creeping mist

silhouetted briefly against the glowing fog

Mist

turns yellow

back lighted by the sun

behind the rise

Hills materialize piecemeal

turning gray then green

as a glowing white sun ball

floats upwards through translucent vapor

The ground fog burns off

The earth expands

The horizon asserts itself

A dove launches itself

on whistling wings

going nowhere

A cottontail hunches down

still nibbling a leaf

in the cool ,damp dawn

carl940421

**3**

**Anvil Clouds**

Like lava spewing through a field of snow

rising currents push moisture upwards

to flatten out like a red hot rivet

hit by a heavy hammer.

Virga veils the lower levels

while eddy currents

drip

and tumble

and rise

decorating the anvil tree

with white snowy fruit.

carl 970615

**DROUGHT**

IT HASN'T RAINED IN A LONG, LONG TIME

THE LAKE HAS DROPPED AND

TURNED TO MUD AND SLIME.

THE GRAVEL BEACH IS A HUNDRED YARDS WIDE

THE BOAT RAMP IS TWO HUNDRED FEET

FROM THE WATER, A TOO FAR FOR A BOAT TO SLIDE

A TEN MILLION YEAR THICK LAYER

OF FOSSILED LIMESTONE EXPOSED BY THE DROUGHT

SAYS THAT DROUGHT IS NO STRANGER.

A ROAD RUNNER HUNTS LIZARDS IN A PRICKLY PEAR

WHERE PRICKLY PEAR CACTUS AND LIZARDS

HAVE NOT LIVED FOR FIFTY YEARS

WE AND THE FISH HOPE FOR RAIN AND WONDER

WHY WE HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN.

IS THAT THE RUMBLE OF THUNDER?

CARL 960301

**4**

**Argentia in the Fog**

It's foggy.

An SA-16 Albatross departs

its wing tip lights rip through the gray mist.

Low visibility.

A coiled snake of pulsating approach lights

strikes at the runway threshold.

Pea soup.

White wing tip lights and the engine roar

are the only signs of a departing P2V.

Thick enough to cut.

Grey apparitions materialize from the mist

as fuel trucks and NC-5 mobile power units carry on.

Ducks are hitchhiking.

Our radar Constellation takes off on a heading

hoping the weather will break before its time to land.

Gulls are grounded.

Alternate fields are Keflavic, Glasgow and Copenhagen

and their weather ain't too good.

A pod of whales just swam by.

Sure wish I was down there dry and warm

wishing I were up here flying.

carl 15 Aug 61

Popcorn Clouds

I am flying east

Rows of popcorn clouds

Run north and south

Like rows of cotton

Waiting to be plucked

**5**

**Not Snow**

The TV weather guesser predicted

Clear and cold and dry and maybe a freeze

So I filled the bird feeders and the bird bath

Covered the plants and the faucets

And brought in the pets.

The wind blew most of the night and it got cold

As the sun crawled out of the morning clouds

I looked out to see how low the temperature went

The mercury was in the 40s

But the bird bath was white

Ice? Illusion? Mirage?

I pulled on a jacket to check

And found all the water evaporated

I need to paint the bird bath bottom

Some other color than white.

**Pearl River Flood**

Lead gray sky

over Jackson Mississippi

with rain and hail.

Over the jasmine and the piney woods,

a mockingbird on the flies.

The Pearl River was up

bird nest high in the trees

dirty brown-gray water

over flowing their cup.

carl 950501

**6**

**Rain and the Drought of 2011**

Carl Lahser

17 Sep 2011

1. Pink Snow (Benefits of just waiting)

On this hot, humid Saturday afternoon.

Footprints remained in the grass as I walked to the hammock.

I dozed and read in the 90 degree shade

waiting for the sundown cool of evening to water

and trim the seed heads from bloomed-out crepe myrtles.

I was still waiting when a breeze came up

and up

and up

until tree branches whipped in the wind

and crepe myrtle blossoms covered the grass

with pink and white and magenta snow.

Then a mist began that quickly became a hard rain.

In a couple minutes the rain passed

leaving a humid but cooler afternoon.

**2. How Much Did It Rain?**

Our local weather guesser predicted rain.

It did.

Fourteen tiny drops

and three quarter size

per square foot.

Virga did it again.

**7**

1. **Rain Dance**

It had not rained in a couple months

so I paid little attention to

clouds in the southwest.

Then rain began to fall

and I felt like dancing in the back yard

naked in the rain.

But the rain quit before I got my shirt unbuttoned.

Someday it’s gotta rain a little better than that.

**Rain in Three Parts**

**I**

From gray, amorphous clouds

falls rain looking like a horses tail

flipping slowly in the wind.

Sometimes the rain

blows away or evaporates

before it hits the ground

**2**

Look ahead.

In the distance the horizon

becomes blurred then

disappears into a cloud

as rain cells drop their load

heavy rain within the lighter showers

**3**

After the rain

standing water reflects.

Reflecting sunlight

like a broken string of mirrored beads

ponds and cattle trails red beneath the silver

liquid silver strands in the rows of a new field

Water to make the summer green.

carl 950531

**8**

# Breaking the Bracketville Drought

I pulled off highway 90

into the wet parking lot

of the Burger and Shake

on an August Monday morning

joining half a dozen other pickups.

A black cow dog jumped

out of a pickup bed

and lifted his leg on my left front tire

then stood looking at me

slowly wagging his soggy tail.

Inside out of the drizzle

were a dozen men

in ball caps or straw western hats

all smiles with the morning rain,

the first in months.

This rain could save the remaining

cotton, cattle and goats.

Purple Sage was in bloom.

On Tuesday morning

the smiles were gone.

They talked of the 14-inch overnight rain,

cattle stranded on high ground,

goats up in the trees,

sheep floating down flooded draws, and

cotton plants beat flat.

“Wish it would stop raining,” says one.

“Bet you wish you’d have wished for rain

instead of praying for it,” replied another dryly.

They all kinda laughed to keep from crying.

carl980818

**9**

**Rain on the Beach**

**Summer Shower**

On a bright but overcast day

a piece of the horizon disappears in haze

as a shower walks down the beach

A breeze freshens and cools the afternoon.

The waves flatten and the sea oats begin to croon

as a shower walks down the beach.

A mist blows and light rain begins to fall.

Mothers grab towels and kids and run to escape the squall

as a shower walks down the beach.

Hard rain falls for a moment

then passes and the sun begins to shine

as the shower continues down the beach.

**Fall Storm**

Wind howls through the oaks and pines

and whistles past the sea oats on the dunes

as grey clouds from the north attack the afternoon.

A cold mist begins to fall and drifts like ghosts

and the sea and clouds blend in an ominous grey.

Whitecaps breaking on the barrier reef cease to play.

A cold, pelting rain begins to fall pounding flat

the footprints of the last visitors and

sea oats tracings and small shells protruding from the sand.

The rain slackens and stops and the wind drops.

The mist turns to virga and the waves begin to roll.

Shells and other sea life lay on the sand, the storms toll.

A gull lands and scans the beach for lunch.

**10**

**Reflections of Texas**

Flying to Dallas you see amongst dark green trees

like small spotlights the morning sun

reflected from ponds and pools.

Reflections from metal roofs flash

like guns of a hundred hunters.

Sun reflecting from windshields in vast parking lots

flash like fireworks.

Nothing reflects from an abandoned old red barn

but the dreams and desires that built the barn.

Carl/980404/reflections

Saint John’s Firebow

The Avalon Peninsula was covered in a thin overcast

When I arrived in St John’s in late afternoon

Cirrus clouds were lit like a rainbow

A fire cloud just above a silver crescent moon.

Carl Sep 03

**11**

**Spring Rain**

I watch the rain falling

Spring storms from Mexico

Denting our drought

With a foot of rain

Rain drops hitting the blacktop

Like a complicated ballet

Pirouetting with inverted silver tutus

Rain drops hitting puddles

Generating bulls eyes

Racing into infinity

When it’s all over

There are puddles

Gifts left for tomorrow

The heavy grey storm clouds

Leave no rainbow

Ask no forgiveness.

Carl 24May15

**12**

**STORM OVER COLORADO SPRINGS**

Where is Pikes Peak?

What has become of Colorado Springs and Manitou?

They are hidden behind or in a great white cloud

that appears almost every afternoon.

Monsoon rains mask the mountains

and hot, white lightning marks

the mountaintops.

Cheyenne Mountain and Twin Peaks

are clearly visible to the south.

Monument Valley and Black Forest

are in sunshine to the north.

Only the jagged, white streaks of lightening

illuminate the storm

that masks Colorado Springs.

The torrents slack.

the rain stops.

Pikes Peak is silhouetted

against a storm-colored evening sky.

carl 930718

**WEST TEXAS DROUGHT**

An almost empty lake sits baking in the sun.

Fifty square miles of lake bottom

covered with dry powdery silt the color of snow

slowly being taken over

by noxious weeds defeating the native vegetation.

A giant dust devil redistributes some of the silt.

carl 970323

**13**

**SUN SHOWER**

Mid September afternoon

Under a blue fall sky with thunder bumpers

Shaded by a tall oak

Sitting

Reading

A cloud passes overhead

Passing onwards with the jet stream

Dappled sun returns

With a light sprinkle

Small, cold droplets

Evaporating

Cooling

My mother described this

As a Sun Shower

We three kids playing in the yard

Caught in a Sun Shower

Ran to her protection

“It’s just a Sun Shower and will give you luck”

That Sun Shower

Was effective for 75 years

How long will this one last?

Another day at a time?

Carl 14Sept13

Rain- big cold drops and little blowing mist

so long as it is wet

and breaks the drought.