**[I see that chance hath chosen me]**

I see that chance hath chosen me

Thus secretly to live in pain,

And to another given the fee,

Of all my loss to have the gain:

By chance assign’d thus do I serve.

And other have that I deserve.

Unto myself sometime alone

I do lament my woful case;

But what availeth me to moan

Since truth and pity hath no place

In them, to whom I sue and serve?

And other have that I deserve.

To seek by mean to change this mind,

Alas, I prove, it will not be;

For in my heart I cannot find

Once to refrain, but still agree,

As bound by force, alway to serve,

And other have that I deserve.

Such is the fortune that I have,

To love them most that love me lest;

And to my pain to seek, and crave

The thing that other have possest:

So thus in vain alway I serve,

And other have that I deserve.

And till I may appease the heat,

If that my hap will hap so well,

To wail my woe my heart shall frete,

Whose pensive pain my tongue can tell;

Yet thus unhappy must I serve.

And other have that I deserve.

 —Sir Thomas Wyatt

 **Personal Poem**

Now when I walk around at lunchtime

I have only two charms in my pocket

an old Roman coin Mike Kanemitsu gave me

and a bolt-head that broke off a packing case

when I was in Madrid the others never

brought me too much luck though they did

help keep me in New York against coercion

but now I’m happy for a time and interested

I walk through the luminous humidity

passing the House of Seagram with its wet

and its loungers and the construction to

the left that closed the sidewalk if

I ever get to be a construction worker

I’d like to have a silver hat please

and get to Moriarty’s where I wait for

LeRoi and hear who wants to be a mover and

shaker the last five years my batting average

is .016 that’s that, and LeRoi comes in

and tells me Miles Davis was clubbed 12

times last night outside birdland by a cop

a lady asks us for a nickel for a terrible

disease but we don’t give her one we

don’t like terrible diseases, then

we go eat some fish and some ale it’s

cool but crowded we don’t like Lionel Trilling

we decide, we like Don Allen we don’t like

Henry James so much we like Herman Melville

we don’t want to be in the poets’ walk in

San Francisco even we just want to be rich

and walk on girders in our silver hats

I wonder if one person out of the 8,000,000 is

thinking of me as I shake hands with LeRoi

and buy a strap for my wristwatch and go

back to work happy at the thought possibly so

 —Frank O’Hara

 **As Bad as a Mile**

Watching the shied core

Striking the basket, skidding across the floor,

Shows less and less of luck, and more and more

Of failure spreading back up the arm

Earlier and earlier, the unraised hand calm,

The apple unbitten in the palm.

 —Philip Larkin

**Gambling In Stateline, Nevada**

The great cracked shadow of the Sierra Nevada

Hoods over the last road.

I came down here from the side of

A cold cairn where a girl named Rachel

Just made it inside California

And died of bad luck.

Here, across from the keno board,

An old woman

Has been beating a strange machine

In its face all day.

Dusk limps past in the street.

I step outside.

It's gone.

I finger a worthless agate

In my pocket.

 —James Wright

 **Kore**

 As I was walking

 I came upon

chance walking

 the same road upon.

As I sat down

 by chance to move

later

 if and as I might,

light the wood was,

 light and green,

and what I saw

 before I had not seen.

It was a lady

 accompanied

by goat men

 leading her.

Her hair held earth.

 Her eyes were dark.

A double flute

 made her move.

“O love,

 where are you

leading

 me now?”

 —Robert Creeley

 **To Luck**

In the cards and at the bend in the road

we never saw you

in the womb and in the cross fire

in the numbers

whatever you had your hand in

which was everything

we were told never

to put our faith in you

but to bow to you humbly after all

because in the end there was nothing

else we could do

but we were not to believe in you

and though we might coax you with pebbles

kept warm in the hand

or coins or relics

of vanished animals

observances rituals

none of them binding upon you

who make no promises

we might do such things only

not to neglect you

and risk your disfavor

O you who are never the same

who are secret as the day when it comes

you whom we explain

as often as we can

without understanding

 —W. S. Merwin