

Everybody's hard these days

everybody
tries to be so
hard
these days

nobody
wants to appear
soft

like they
are all a bunch
of hard-asses
with .22s stuffed
in their pants

like they can
take all comers

like the rain
doesn't wet their backs

and they
scream from the rooftops
their disinterest
with the outside world
how they
don't care
what other people
think

but if you didn't care
why scream about it
at all?

I suppose I do it too
and maybe it's because
I started doing it
that everybody's trying so hard
to be hard these days

everybody's got

a problem to vilify
everybody's got
an agenda to multiple

they all
have the clever
thoughts
but none
of the spirited
actions

nobody
writes about
flowers
anymore

or insects
crawling
along a rose stem

or love
for the sake
of love
and all its
misfortunes

everybody is worried
that people will think they're soft
and unconvinced
of their own preaching

so they encase
their hearts
in ice

as though
they are above
any criticism
any suffering
any epidemic

and when the end of the world comes
they will be the rock

that the weak one's shadows
will be burned into

and they will be able to die
without fear
because a handful
of poems
had made them hard.