

**At A Party**

I'm dressed as the boiling understatement.  
My tongue is shovelling silence.  
It piles like old snow on a curb.  
My ears are prongs bent on insult  
— touchy as tuning forks.  
At times I'm a question machine.  
It's my main means.  
I shoot blanks between smiles.  
I'm two comments at most.  
I head for the safety of bores.

There is dilemma in this peevish snail:  
I'm prepared to kill someone  
But I might make a friend.

— *Heather Cadsby*

**Noah's Wife  
(For Mia)**

It wasn't just the feeding them, though that,  
God knows, was problem enough, nor making sure  
they didn't eat each other, nor even what  
to do with what they did with more and more  
of what they ate. Then there were the leaks  
we sprang—no chance of seasoned timber, being  
as it was such a rush job and all—and the weeks  
turning to months and not once ever seeing  
land. But it wasn't that so much as just  
not knowing what it was all in aid of. If  
Noah was satisfied with the set up, so must  
God have been, I guess. But one good sniff  
aboard that floating shithouse, and what—for Christ's sake!—  
difference was a clean sweep going to make?

— *James Harrison*