

Dead Metaphor Poems

All Walks of Life

crawl, walk, hobble, use a cane,
walker, wheelchair-all walks of life
for all kinds of people
moving by determined breath.

Leaps and Bounds

Oh, if the economy, the elderly
could leap above what binds them—
bound toward bounty.

In the Same Boat

Your boat might leak and sink.
Your boat might capsize
and drown us.
Your boat might be too slow
or fast.
or too expensive.
Mine too?

March of History

Sounds too militaristic.
How about stroll
or more like a parade.
How about herstory
or ourstory meandering
peacefully through time.

Writing on the Wall

That's graffiti in some places
and urgent state of mind
in another.
I prefer writing on a creative page.

Chomping at the Bit

At this age, I don't race anywhere
and if I chomp at the bit
or something hard
the dentist has to patch the tooth.

Checkered Career

Checkered sounds too much
like a game board- flat
and competitive.
What about polka dots of light
unfurling on the fabric of life.

Dead Metaphor Poems:

*The writer's gift is to revive the dead
metaphor, to reveal the pictorial image
sleeping like a seed in the living room.
Northrop Frye*

1. Find a cliché, well-worn phrase and play with it in another way. Stir up old terms. Make more sensitive and gun to the head.
2. Some examples: checkered career, paying the piper, fishing for compliments, depths of despair, higher than a kite, three sheets to the wind, falling off the wagon, in the same boat, chomping at the bit, pig in a poke, armed to the teeth, rock solid, in the nick of time, writing on the wall, ants in your pants, cat got your tongue?, toe the line, give the devil his due, behind the eight ball, raining cats and dogs., six of one and 7 of another, skin of a cat, Don't count your chickens before they hatch, throwing out the baby with the bath water, belly-full, belly-up. cheek by jowl, dressed to the nines.
3. Play and find something new.