

# Small Budget Poems

*by Gary Hardaway*

## **Pure**

What commerce doesn't corrupt  
dies its own unnoticed death,

pure except for that implicit  
collapse in every particle

or wave. Nothing's pure  
but nothing refuses to be imagined

and can't be photographed  
or data-mined or talked to.

## **All the Pretty Poisons**

Toxins make a body happy  
as if acceleration toward

an end of consciousness  
is its own reward.

I'll take mine black.  
Or tawny gold, no ice.

## **Day Off**

Enjoy the shit  
you didn't do  
because the work

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you attend to  
all other days  
sucks you dry  
of vital fluids.

### **English Is an Entertaining Language**

Affluence, effluence—  
but a vowel's bit  
of difference.

### **Freaks**

Our species survived  
as a freak of nature.  
How unfortunate for nature.

### **Big Sky Apocalypse**

When the collapse comes  
the Koch brothers will starve to death

in Idaho or Montana  
or one of those wingnut states

where the sky  
if you really look at it

will tell you what a small piece  
of cosmic dust you are

so you focus on fences

and tax rates

to save you from  
existential disaster.

