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Two Poems by Maureen Hynes

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Everything's Hunky-Dory: Two Poems

bedside table

after Eve Joseph's "The poet keeps a jar..."
in *Quarrels*

I keep a silver pillbox of ampersands
in its drawer & on sleepless
nights I take a few to reconnect

me with my dreams & to counter-
act the question marks
I swallowed all day

the ampersands are so smooth
& curlicued & much more genteel
than the pragmatic plus sign

they have been a bit lonely
ever since being lopped
off the end of the alphabet

so they are glad to be of service
in reuniting us with our wishes
unbidden fantasies dead

relatives & even our worst
horrors which we can sometimes
wake up from

I take the professional grade
they are a bit pliable & elastic
they can be chewed their effect

stretched out for a whole night
of uninterrupted oddities hidden
yearnings surprising reunions

Everything's Hunky-Dory

after Harryette Mullen's "Jinglejangle"
in *Sleeping with the Dictionary*

Luckily I have a lot of highbrow
knick-knacks. A hurdy-gurdy
& a shipshape buzzsaw. Quicksilver
shoeshine & flim-flam pyjamas,
all kinda loosey-goosey.
Tick-tocks for the stock pot.
A crackerjack and flip-flops
that go clip-clop if you jazz up
the soles with some klunky
razzmatazz doo-dads. Streams & streams
of sticky tickertape picked up off the wet
streetscape after a rainy parade
to celebrate the wicked war's end, or
after the snowstorm when the dream team
was elected, but ding-dong, now
they're dead. A bright whirly jukebox
that plays a lot of artsy-fartsy claptrap,
but one treasure is the old cassette
of Brendan Behan singing
Jingle jangle goes the ould triangle –
his party piece. And mine.
A chock-a-block collection that just
looks higgledy-piggledy but melts
the hearts of the hoity-toity & tickles

the toes of the whippersnappers
& the pipsqueaks. What good fortune.

MAUREEN HYNES is the author of seven books, five of which are poetry. Her latest collection is *Sotto Voce* (fall, 2019), which was shortlisted for the League of Canadian Poets' Pat Lowther Award and the Golden Crown Literary Awards (U.S.). Maureen's first book of poetry, *Rough Skin*, won the League's Lampert Award, and her 2016 collection, *The Poison Colour*, was shortlisted for both the Lowther and Souster Awards. Maureen's poetry has been included in over 25 anthologies, including twice in *Best Canadian Poems in English*, and in *Best of the Best Canadian Poetry*, 2017. Maureen is poetry editor for *Our Times* magazine.
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