



Flag Erotic

*It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flag staffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.**

You're not supposed to think of the flag
in that way. Flags have rules
about touching, folding.

But isn't there something
about the way
it hangs in zero wind,
folding in
on itself like a closed flower
in the stillness
in the silence
without word or whisper?

Isn't there something about
the careless fall
the gentle tousled fall
of being passionately
tossed, the thin silky fabric,
sheets disarrayed by wind?

Is that why we must keep it lit
at night? And lead us not
into temptation? And is even this
unpatriotic? And will you
respect me in the morning?

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Size Matters

Imagine singing "Oh, say, can you see" to a flag you can't see. That's what graduate students at the University of Texas at Dallas had in mind when they created the likeness of an American flag so small it would take more than 10 to span the width of a human hair.

As in, matters of size,
not the bigger the better.

Every flag's flawed
with perfection

I don't think we'll be adding
any more stars

any time soon.
We've got enough trouble

with the ones we already have.
We lock our doors

but leave our mailboxes
open. In case someone

wants to say they love us
some random night full

of unfixed stars
You can put anything

on a flag. You can put the flag
on a toothpick or grow one with flowers.

Just bills, the mailman says,
and he knows what a bill looks like.

The flag bracket was made
for a bigger flag, drilled into

the siding, claiming this house
as one more piece of America.

Proportion is a relative thing.
The size of a child's coffin

is always too large.
Modesty is a relative thing.

When it comes to flags
If it's the thought that counts

who's doing the counting?
Perhaps each of us is our own

tiny country
and our hearts are our flags.

Perhaps not.
I used to think our country

had a big heart
but I'm not so sure anymore.

When my children were young
we used to make flags

for imaginary countries
with crayons and scissors

glue and naivety.
It takes a certain amount

of naivety to make any flag.
Ours were probably about the size

of this one. We loved each other.
We had parades.