

## Write More Light—Live! Day 2 prompt: “Spontaneous Composition”

For today’s prompt, let’s start by reading Matt Hart’s “Breaking Spring”:

<https://poets.org/poem/breaking-spring>

This poem is full of energy & daily-ness, observation (internal & external) & momentum. It questions & declares. It moves from a reflection on the recent past to the immediacy today & tomorrow coming, with worry & wonder & dread & humor. And it reads/feels like it’s happening in real time—as we move through the world, as we try to keep up with our thoughts—and rather than resisting, or trying to impose more order on, the kinetic energy of the leaps being made, the poem doesn’t “fight the river” & feels natural in the way it represents the movements of the body & the mind.

What are the stylistic features that stand out most to you that give the poem a feel of immediacy? How can we be both reflective & in the moment in our writing—that is to say, include long reaches of time (the way we do when we read a book like *Frankenstein*, for example) and still remain in the moment? How are the concrete & the abstract colliding in this poem & how might we use such collisions in our own work? How can we maintain the energy of a first draft through the revision process?

### “Spontaneous Combustion” Prompt

1. Develop a fast/quick list of language—words, phrases, etc. (mostly action verbs & concrete nouns) collected from recently encountered sources (i.e. ads, digital content, song lyrics, overheard conversation, instructions, signage, homework, newspapers/magazines, books, tv/film, billboards, menus, inside jokes, trade/skill-specific vocabularies, etc.). 2-3 minutes.
2. What’s a question/idea/etc. you’ve been “burning” on (thinking/dreaming about, etc.) for a long time? A reoccurring concern, a constant question, a pondering, a looped memory, a conundrum that’s been following you, etc.? Use the first one that comes to mind & focus exclusively on that one for the moment/for this prompt.
3. Use the language from step 1 (& any-/everything else that comes to mind) to write into/through/ around/etc. the question/idea/etc. from step 2.

Try as much as you can to play with the language & follow where the language leads—don’t worry too much about making sense, technical mistakes (revise later/last), misuses & misunderstandings of words, Freudian slips, etc. Mistakes can unlock doors you didn’t know were there to open. Try to write in the first person, present tense (or: in your own voice & in the moment), but the writing should take any form/shape it needs to & should otherwise do whatever it wants.

“Go on your nerve” (Frank O’Hara), trust your gut, write as far as you can. See what happens. Repeat as necessary.

4. Revise as needed for maximum terrific-ness, trying to retain & enhance as much of the spontaneous energy/movement from the initial composition as possible. Share widely.