Two Poems by Maureen Hynes

Maureen Hynes
George Brown College (retired)
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
& curliced & 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.