

Calls of Nature

Calls of nature are mortal dangers:
eating, sleeping, defecation,
copulation. Case in point:
the notice in a recent *Times*
of a boy in Africa, eight
or nine, swallowed by a python
while doing his business in the woods.

And who hasn't seen the cat wait
to pounce until the bird is unwary?
Appetite puts the mouse in the trap.
Stories of men choking to death
at table or dying of natural causes
in bed are commonplace and men
are well aware that heart attacks
often occur at the peak of pleasure.

But to be fair, we have to note
that doing without is equally dire:
lack of food and drink and sleep,
impacted bowels or backed up bladder
lead to death; and none who know
the history of poetry
can doubt that lack of love can kill.

So, my dear, though we may live
in fear for what we do or don't,
let's be careful where and what
we eat and thus eliminate,
and when we are most vulnerable
let's choose the course of wisdom
and trust we'll be most secure
in one another's loving embrace.