

WHEN  
IN DOUBT,  
DUCK

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TINE VAN AERSCHOT

WHEN  
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DE NIEUWE  
TONEELBIBLIOTHEEK





# Poem One

when in doubt, duck  
in geval van twijfel, eend  
en cas de doute, le canard

when in doubt, dive  
in geval van twijfel, duik  
en cas de doute, plongée

when in doubt, reach for the clouds  
in geval van twijfel, reik naar de wolken  
en cas de doute, optez pour les nuages

when in doubt, stay in full flight  
in geval van twijfel, blijf in volle vlucht  
en cas de doute, rester en plein vol

when in doubt, drop out of sight  
in geval van twijfel, val uit het zicht  
en cas de doute, laisser tomber hors de vue

when in doubt, spread your wings and glide  
in geval van twijfel, spreid je vleugels en zweef  
en cas de doute, déployer vos ailes et glisse

when in doubt, land on a wire with pride  
in geval van twijfel, land op een draad met trots  
en cas de doute, la terre sur un fil avec fierté

when in doubt, take a closer look  
in geval van twijfel, ga van dichterbij kijken  
en cas de doute, jetez un oeil de plus près

when in doubt, eat what you can get  
in geval van twijfel, eet wat je kan krijgen  
en cas de doute, mangez ce que vous pouvez  
obtenir

# Text One

It is said that a peacock is ashamed  
when he looks at his legs  
It is said that the remarkable animal  
that is the ostrich  
digests iron and stones  
It is said  
that storks live  
and are only to be found  
in republics and free states.

If, in 1594  
you would happen to stumble upon  
a gaggle of Barnacle geese — *rotganzen in dutch*  
you might be tempted to quote  
‘the herbal or general history of plants’  
by the learned John Gerard



and say that a Barnacle goose — *rotgans in dutch*  
is the fruit of the Barnacle tree.  
and I quote:

There are found  
in the north parts of Scotland  
and the adjacent islands  
called Orkney's,  
certain trees,  
whereon do grow certain eggs of a white colour,  
wherein are contained little living creatures.

In times of maturity the shells open,  
and out of them come those little living things,  
which falling into the water  
become goslings, which we call Barnacles.

— *rotganzen in dutch*

Seagulls are fantastic birds.  
In the middle of a storm  
they stand firm on one leg,  
on top of a lamppost.

Seagulls play for hours high in the sky,  
climbing on streams of hot air,

diving for fun,  
screaming their lungs out.

To me it sounds as if they are laughing  
at everything and everybody.

All the time.

When you are out and about in the boat,  
hours removed from the coastline,  
you will find a gull,  
bobbing on the waves,  
all alone,  
not bothered at all.

When the ground is dry as dust  
and the gull feels like a snack  
it will start its frantic dance  
hopping at incredible speed  
from one leg to the other and back again  
until the worm has been fooled  
and comes to the surface  
fully convinced it is raining.

Last week

at 197 Harington road in Brighton,  
a seagull  
stole the puppy of a Chihuahua  
from the back garden.  
Mister Cyril Atwater  
who resides there  
told us  
that he had been trying  
to keep the puppies indoors.  
But Tuesday last,  
the stoutest of the litter got out,  
with the disastrous result.  
Mister Atwater said  
he and his wife were doing the dishes  
when he noticed a large seagull  
struggling with something  
on the back steps.  
Because seagulls are a pest,  
he tapped on the window.  
It was only then, when the bird took off,  
that he saw the little puppy caught in its beak.  
And he and his wife  
could not do a thing about it

# Poem Two

when in doubt, ask a friend  
bij twijfel, vraag een vriend  
en cas de doute, demandez à un ami

when in doubt, consult the dictionary  
bij twijfel, raadpleeg het woordenboek  
en cas de doute, consultez le dictionnaire

when in doubt, check your pocket  
in geval van twijfel, controleer uw zak  
en cas de doute, consultez votre poche

when in doubt, have your DNA tested  
bij twijfel, heb je DNA getest  
en cas de doute, demandez à votre test ADN

when in doubt, take direction  
bij twijfel, richting  
en cas de doute, prendre la direction

when in doubt, follow a course  
bij twijfel, een cursus volgen  
en cas de doute, suivez un cours

when in doubt, read a book  
bij twijfel, een boek lezen  
en cas de doute, lire un livre

when in doubt, listen to your mother  
bij twijfel, luister naar je moeder  
en cas de doute, écoutez votre mère

when in doubt, go ahead regardless  
bij twijfel, ga je gang ongeacht  
en cas de doute, aller de l'avant  
indépendamment

# Text Two

## A

acclaim

accuse

acknowledge

address

admit

admonish

advise

advocate

affirm

agree

air

alert

announce

answer

articulate

ask

assert  
assign  
aver

## B

babble  
berate  
blab  
blabber  
blather  
blether  
broadcast  
buttonhole

## C

call  
call out  
castigate  
caution  
censure  
chaffer  
challenge  
charge  
chastise  
chat

chatter  
chew the fat  
chide  
chitchat  
chronicle  
claim  
clarify  
come clean  
comment  
command  
communicate  
condemn  
condescend  
confabulate  
confess  
confide  
confuse  
contend  
contest  
converse  
convey  
criticize  
cry



cry out

## D

declaim

declare

decode

decree

deliver

denounce

deny

describe

direct

disclose

divulge

draw somebody's attention to

## E

enlighten

exchange a few words

exclaim

explain

expose

express