

CALM DOWN

LEE UPTON

People love to say, Calm down.
Don't have kittens.
As if I'd have kittens.
I'd have tropical ports of call.
Calm down, my banshee,
calm down.
Is that a tattoo,
or were you
painted in the womb?
Calm down.
You're not going
to rob a bank, are you?
Not when you can rob
a perfume counter.
Calm down.
Flea circuses aren't real,
are they?
What about flea clowns?
Close those
circuses down.
Who painted pinwheels
on our turtle?
What famous historical
figure
was born clutching
a blood clot?

Take that down.
While you're at it,
close down
all that racket
inside my head.
It's a test in crowds.
Does a lizard
judge itself harshly
or the rock
it slithers around?
I store anxiety like a camel.
I couldn't be any
other animal.