

Phlox

I never know whether to reach
out for language with an un-gloved
hand, for fear of what might touch me,
or hold safe with my reader.

My distrust of alluring rhyme,
my ill-shod shuffle with rhythm,
trip me time after time; the whole
blimmin' load tangles

and my syntax collapses on the fret
of that glove, that un-fingered hand
that might yet point me out
some taxonomical black hole.

A glove can be worn both out and in,
letters read upside down.
Deck chair shifts and smart alec quips
tinkle and drain away.

Dark matter swirls in our system.
Can my hand undrown from this glove?
And should I pursue even one
obscure finger, what realms, what hope?

John Adams