

Pattern Recognition by Glen Wells

what I see is real
what is real I can not see
my thoughts are real to me
to you they are the words you read



Poems

1. Quantum Flood.....	5
2. Spin.....	7
3. Foolproof Vision.....	7
4. Subterranean homesick blueness.....	8
5. Space-Time.....	9
6. The Caveman Sleeps.....	10
7. 2006.....	11
8. Impregnating the impulse to conceive.....	12
9. Antidotal Evidence.....	12
10. Singularity.....	13
11. Some are, some not.....	14
12. De-coding the catapult.....	15
13. A Participle.....	15
14. The Gerund.....	17
15. The Four F's.....	17
16. Non-Specific Relativity.....	18
17. It's Science.....	19
18. Toothless.....	19
19. Addiction.....	20
20. John Dean and Joan d'Arc.....	21
21. Breaking Luck.....	22
22. Lost In Atlantis.....	23
23. Out of my head.....	24
24. Western thought/Eastern mind.....	24
25. Lay of the Land.....	25
26. Stretching.....	25
27. Satellite Picture Show.....	26
28. Pattern Recognition.....	27
29. Story.....	41
30. Kinky Sex.....	41
31. In Coitus.....	43
32. Making It.....	45
33. The Day Before Tomorrow.....	46
34. Evamotion.....	46
2	
35. False Positive.....	47
36. The Invisible Bus.....	48

37. The Secret Wedding.....	49
38. Mona Lisa Smile.....	50
39. I don't think so.....	51
40. Heredity.....	52
41. Untitled.....	53
42. I think she is dead.....	53
43. If.....	54
44. A boatload of bugs.....	55
45. Lullaby.....	55
46. DÉTOUR.....	56
47. Past Life.....	57
48. semi-epic.....	58
49. The Divan.....	61
50. Unicorns.....	62
51. sidebar.....	62
52. When robbery isn't theft.....	63
53. Landed.....	63
54. Disturbing Paradise.....	64
55. Rumours.....	66
56. Revolt.....	67
57. Gut Check.....	67
58.	
Happy?.....	68
59. Guilty By Nature.....	69
60. Perfect Stranger.....	71
61. Avalon.....	73
62. In Complete.....	74
63. Think; dead man walking.....	75
64. It's Amsterdam.....	76
65. James Dean on a soapbox.....	76
66. Anticipation.....	77
67. as the hand moved across the keys.....	77
68. Folks.....	78
69. Sight Unseen.....	79
70. Cartwheels.....	80
71. Cat's Cradle.....	80
72. Lost in Transition.....	81
3	
73. Jasmine.....	83
74. the Punch & Judy show.....	84

Prose

75. As The Words Spin (out of control).....	85
76. Interview with a Fern.....	91
77. Top of the Mountain (a short short stories).....	92
78. Eskimo Summer.....	102
79. Debtor's Prison.....	104
80. Thelma and Clyde.....	106
81. Mullung.....	109
82. crumbs.....	110

-from the heart
-pathed to blessedness

-atomic structure
-reveals architecture
-the suicide kiss
-folds upon space
-leaving
-void

-the magnetic caress
-engulfs liquid time sparks
-for each division
-there is a season

-inside the microscopic galaxy
-beliefs are as real as sin
-the bleeding faith as natural
-as spoken breath
-the night
-cold

-eye makes reality disappear
-the naked sky fills
-elated harmony
-blood & vapor touch
-the day
-warm

-patterns evolve, evoke and descend
-happy in the heaven
-the world is but a kin
-travelers and weary men
-testify

5

-their hubris
-the verdict

-my midnight starry love

-overhead, overheard
-life is lips
-speak
-tyger burns
-brighter still the sun
-melting into one
-mitosis*
-I salute thee

*Mitosis is the process by which a cell ensures each daughter cell will have a complete set of chromosomes. There are five key stages of mitosis: During **prophase** the chromosomes become condensed and key proteins begin to bind the kinetochores, preparing for spindle attachment. Upon nuclear envelope breakdown, the cell enters **prometaphase**, during which the mitotic spindle is formed and the chromosomes attach to microtubules in the spindle via their kinetochores. Once attached, the chromosomes start to align along the metaphase plate in the center of the spindle. During **metaphase**, all of the chromosomes are attached to microtubules via their kinetochores, and aligned at the metaphase plate. At **anaphase** onset, the sister chromatids separate and are moved toward the poles of the spindle. The chromosomal separation and movement toward the poles is called anaphase A. The spindle poles separate as well, which is referred to as anaphase B. Midzone complex formation also occurs in anaphase. During **telophase**, the mother cell is physically divided into two daughter cells by **cytokinesis**.

6

Spin

revolutions per second
igniting plasma manna from the sky
purifying gold powder

drenched in non-touch memory
anti-gravitational sound speaks
with silent thought.

begin and end
all the summer "sons" shall sing
elation above heads and heels
"Just" love
some equations mount
the pillar, pulled from stone

Foolproof Vision

In the night sky I saw Orion
Jupiter and Mars
Venus was inconsolable
hiding behind an Oort Cloud
In May or December I wished upon a star
Betelgeuse or Rigel
Pleiades was obscured by Hubble
some satellite or such
I was making love beneath a full moon light
when caution blew a hole in the wind
a meteor shower was burning nightingales
from the sky
some fate took hold of constellations
and brought a black hole near

7

time was stood on its tail
space became a menace
as the sun spun out of control

Subterranean homesick blueness

Where are you from?
From my mother's womb.
Actually from star stuff by way of your mother's womb.

Atomic numbers adding
^to clandestine myopic strategies
Incorporated into final decadence
^delivered from past lives
To future lies from present mistakes
^littered on the highways
A field study done undercover
^of stars that fairly faint in color
Foisting ideograms past their prime
^noticing the collective mimetic thrashing
Wildly in the night iguana sunspots
^delivered to master cannibalistic earthworms
Believed to foster subversive verses
^the kind that ferrets its wisdom insidiously
Beneath the thunder
^silence rains

8

Space-Time

Devoid and ovoid. Deluged in thought. Mesmerized amnesiacs scoffing.

Clouded streets trumpet painful degrees of guilt.

Swallow hard the blatant Saxony sound, defeated.

In-between-the-lines the space creating time, eludes capture, understanding,
definition and clarity.

Weakness rises in turmoil.
Patterns diffuse their primary defense.
Ignore except when needed.

Loosely described in pantomime.
Fingers etch on shadows.
The walls decline to answer.

Not calling for revolution, evolution,
creative design, creative differences,
memory lapses, forgetful forgers,
hysteric historians, libeling libertarians,
systematic scientific sectarians,
egalitarian elucidators of educational egress.

Calling for strong silent types (I can't answer),
optimistic non-cynical
cyclical coniferous
tree hugging spiritual sprites
of "It's a Brand New Day".

9

The Caveman Sleeps

Don't dream like flesh
Or whisper a coward's threat
Feel a million dancers
Beneath the melting heat

So much was answered by prays
And fascination

Imagine tell-tale signs
Leaking upwards through time

Peeking into future messages
Telling lies and false positive test results
Rolling numbers of strong versus weak
The red-heads revolt gets scattered against the wind

Nature beats nurture eventually
Persistence of the hard-wires eclipsing
The paid by the hour of stay-at-home moms
Star stuff is stronger than that

10

2006

What do you know and when did you know it?

I knew a season in the sun
love lost, lingered and ran amok
crucified with bitter tears

a verbatim list of sins may reveal

cavalier scorn
sommnambulant attitude
notification of next-to-kin

bits of paper stuck to walls
Happy New Year
confetti flying
climbing the stairwell
vertigo dying

into deep
dead end

the popular recollection
accounts for dicey
memorial

fools feel floods
a rising tide of ingestion
nothing left to shame
guilty of everything
1986.

dedicated to the unfortunate raccoon

11

Impregnating the impulse to conceive

seminal fluted animas pondered deathly ill
scarce retro profits morbidly kind
never festered fire lanes equal to task
neuter clowns cleaving romantic to tilt

aiding and abetting obey beast of whine
alabaster neural twines complexity of doubt
insure testimony counter-intelligence sound creepy
illicit complexion faceted deep diving drowns

lewd commotion spears roving bands
locating no line drawn in the sands of timber
safely interred quiet sleep and vegetative
serene school of thought revealed as.....

2 snails smoking

Antidotal Evidence

I'm dying to tell you about the lateness of breath
Fascinated by the tears of harmony

When...

The steps are found and taken
The blue bombardier has spoken
While memories fry the brain
Jesus flies through rain

12

Then...

The apple, serpent and tree are talking
Asking where the mountain failed
In the past they would remember
How the snow lost its cold
Melting into the steamy underworld

If...

The clowns continue laughing
As hyenas in the dark

The play bears watching
As we stroll through the park

Singularity

the singularity is coming
it's already here
mind-numbing vigilance pounces every thought
the crowning achievement unknown, unmasked
delivered fully grown

the singularity is leaving
it's future in doubt
destruction or revolution
count me in and count me out
just count me right

the singularity is here
it's heat spreading out
it woke among the flowers
planting seeds and boomerangs
blooming fully sown

13

Some are, some not

The glacial heat frozen in a time of debate
Some are, some not
Waiting for the Galactic meet

Mayan prophecy appears
And disappears
As reality shifts, polar winds reverse
The counting begins first

The least frontier waiting in harbor

Some are, some not
Seeking favor from the Fountainhead

For sundry reasons the clowns expound
Beauteous causes to abound
Inside the teeming melodrama scenes
Egos lost in melancholy dreams

The old cold sun dead inside debris
Some are, some not
Listening to the music of the Spheres

Clothed in light of thought and grace
Driven from home into this place
Shallow graves and thunderstorms
Masses repel invocation then swarms

14

De-coding the catapult

long livers teach the truth
to mischief makers
seek the calm inside the storm that brews
afterlife and counter-balance each and every tool
death defying analytical squandering the past
slow-emotion drifting through heated debate and desire
the class of happening regret
borrowed fiendishness replacing moral compass
the minute by minute after-glow
dissolving into future realms of feast
eating mistakes, par-taking the fuel of floods

it's only water, evaporating into sky and clown
the wait is hardest before the fall
failure a questionable option not signed or seared
sun leaks gravity that surrounds all morning
then the dewy burst of gluttony fells the mighty oak
some such refinery melts from somber reflection
the eye-opening regalia dances light in a voice of retreat

A Participle

A lack of sympathy makes for impossible dreaming
While hiding in a velvet storm
I've eluded capture and memories
Illusions clutch at strings left dangling
A finite pattern of digressions
Leave me immobile
A patient of mine is screaming for release
Sedated with her meds, I nod agreement
She tries to save face
By clouding my judgment

15

Mindful of the tears, I shed the skin
Of an unnamed reptile
Slithering through muck and mire
Knee-deep in Big Muddy
The Nam contagion has returned
Saddam's trial confirms insanity

Losing thoughts of any coherency
I stumble easily
Trip the light Fantasy
Inside this fog
The underground
Crimson and blue
As a Mad Hatter without laughter
Iraqi children sing newly minted realms

Curt, medicated, myopic, blissful, ignorant,
passive, diabetic, claustrophobic, acerbic.

Now in light of day, the plumes of smoke
Rise from the nostrils of a dying dragon
He counts on talons, each victim slain
Makes lists of probable innocents

The olden dreams
Possible, return

16

The Gerund

Everything has been flushed
The passive negativity is seen strolling in the park

Glacial attitude
Spent dreams
Waking to fact
Counter
The inevitable
Summer rain
Caught in freeze
Snowflakes
Balancing on tip-toes

The Four F's

Feeding, fighting, fleeing and fucking
Not necessarily in that order

Fueling, fisticuffing, flying and fornicating
Is there something else, if we can find the time,
...we could spend our days doing?

Forking the audience into finding its truest feelings
In a frenzy, fading away to oblivion
...and messing around to the end of time

17

non-Specific Relativity

I'd think about time
as if
it were a piece of pie
grab a slice
catch a train
never be late

lost in the shuffle
short-comings apparently
render obsolete
thoughtful comparisons
of oblique misinformation

a tasty diagnosis
with no doubt

of therapeutic result
leaves a calming sense
periodic dismembering
withstanding

18

It's Science

blood on the floor
there's alibi to taste
the act of believing
starving the stone of disease\

he's borrowed from cannibals
unfettered
ill from remorse
born of disaster, waiting in line/

blank amid stares
awash in songs of the night
no wind, no sail
adrift>

Toothless

deep in dark
released from center
crushing existential denials
mere math does not suffice
what leaks from minutia
spills down the chin
live-wire bare
creepiness glows
backward from stars
nuts to satisfied mortification
blushing green
envious of the humpback's hole

19

Addiction
(for Elvis)

The crown
stilled
lit from within
fearless

The eye
holds steady
gazing into eternity

The moment
cares not
for frostbit tears

The blinks and stares
ignored
defeated in arrest

The long last look
wasted

The skin
crawling inside
bloated remorse

The taste
sips countless
almost immortal

now
lies dead
The gutter
refusing
occupancy
The hidden gem
faceless

20

John Dean and Joan d'Arc

Dean's faith in Nixon fueled by ambition
Proved to be no great obstacle
To turn aside his blindness
And reveal the tricks and crookedness
Of Dick and his gang

Now Dean has gone on
To bigger, better things
Unmasking Deep Throat
And a call to impeach Dubya
For lies that brought us to war

It was Joan who said
God helps those that help themselves
As she cinched the armor tight
Serving dual purposes
To protect and preserve

Her faith was used to save
The country that she loved
Visions given for her to succeed
Why shouldn't God give his blessing
Against an invading force?

21

Breaking Luck

Connective tissue icebound
Lovers thrill at sight and sound
Of fury's godsend
Placating the meatier parts
Masticating each delectable selection
Durable goods earthbound
And surrendered

Placing the frozen platelets aside
Begin the moment
Gingerly fingering scrotum
Excusing the air of noire debate
Blistered arrogance refutes
This singular activity
Announced as bitter apathy

Thus the dalliance delivers
The mount and stone

Of abbreviated exaggeration
Small comforts elicit little charm
Now slight future plans resume
 To more of just the same
The fortune in pieces, retrieved

22

Lost In Atlantis

Wearing annulled boss's shoes
Collecting Pitney-Bowles stamp machines
 Wading in the kiddie pool
Intoxicated on history's magic ride
Releasing spores without antidotes

The Queen waves at receding tides
 Revealing stone and mason jars
Easter visits embryonic cyclones
 Healing the greatest king
Jabbing kidney's funny bone

We are
Passing through
 Life is
 Hilarious
The world is
 Naked
The future is

Not promised
Love is
Touching
The mind is
Mostly imagination

Lost in Atlantis
Searching for discoveries already found

23

Out of my head

There is no explaining
The crowded thoughts
Of a convoluted mind

Any attempt at deciphering
Fact from fiction
Would require a Rosetta Stone

Understanding may be futile
Even with divination
Or some algebraic logarithm

Without the walk
One can not say
Except to hear with the heart

Western thought/Eastern mind

I'd crawl inside the skin
Of numb redemption
Beat the escalation
Not by leaps and bounds
But of some particle derivative
That's false and consumptive

I'd eat fruit
Believe lies
Steal time
Live lives unfolded
Sit inside the lotus
Crave contempt
Brave the storm and weep

24

Lay of the Land

Dropping blinders cross paths of feet
There is one rule left that shadows can not stand
Presented opportunity calls with clarion voice
Do whatever you can get away with
It can be argued
That it's only capitalists at their worst

If you own
You can not buy
Only sell

If you do not own
You are owned
Partaking of the profits
Does not decide their amounts

Stretching

Baring the open essentials
Keeping closed the strident distance

25

Satellite Picture Show

Tick, tick, tick...

Night visions of sudden remorse feel the longing cascade.
Plaintive division parses torture through niceties of guilt.
The nature/nurture debate derives from Darwin/Freud mindsets.

Play of words...

The period piece speaks volumes from hollow voices,
when the catamount cacophony misses the eagle's scream.

It's not like it feels a shadow brushing up against the leg,
or sidelong glances groping in the dark.

A party starts nightingale singing,
laughter reaching ceiling, sky feeling.

Her mention of past mistakes,
longs her memory,

otherwise the tears are drying without aid of wind,
nothing clouds the thoughts better than a nice compliment of change.

I would question motives of deliverance.

The deal cancels new hopes.

A platter full of hot to trot fries.

Igloo cools the belligerent bully gods of Norse design,
we wouldn't doubt the sincerity of her resolve,
she promises a possible existence of merit.

Then believing it wholesale,
leaps the faith where no nets catch the fallen.
From start to finish,
nothing in between predicted what happens next,
mostly...

26

Pattern Recognition

Table Of Contents

Chapter 1.....	The Quest For The Callipygian Ideal
Chapter 2.....	Shamrock
Chapter 3.....	Heartbeat Evokes Potential
Chapter 4.....	Strangers In Sleep Disguise
Chapter 5.....	Illicit Sanguine Isotopes Of Pause
Chapter 5.....	Sliding In Downward Spirals Sophisticated
Chapter 5.....	Winsome Gals Unite In Freeze
Chapter 6.....	Bent
Chapter 7.....	Raising Eyebrows Across Oceanic Claustrophobia
Chapter 8.....	Cataracts
Chapter 9.....	Glue

Chapter 1

The Quest for the Callipygian Ideal

The bounce, the tilt, an elegant twist
Hypnotic, diasporic, monolithic
A palpable tremor preaches with each succulent stretch
The visage carries forward into a retreating maelstrom
Of shimmy, shake & stride
Thunderous crème-colored thighs attached to desirous undulation
Classified action delivers mercurial delirious joy
This cool justice deserves more attentive haste

Chapter 2

Shamrock
(partly stolen from Aaron Sorkin)

In my religion
There are explosions
With teeth flying
Pelting shattered panes of glass
“there’s redemption, crucifixion and an end”
Trembling feet
Running fast
Cacophony, sensationalism
An undying need to organize
Speed quick looks for
Sorrow on the loose
A plethora of signs
Leading to an enlightenment
Of incongruous foolishness
Blind fastidiousness
Elongated kisses
Blushing with epidermal response
Partly anarchical
Fully distrustful
of Devil, the God and Cain

In my insides

Bordering on mathematical mania
Slowing to doe-eyed glum
It's all beside the point
Certainty beset by paranoid thirst

Bonus theft (from J.J. Abrams and Jeff Melvoin)

“mom put a hit out on me”
So dad killed her

29

Chapter 3

Heartbeat Evokes Potential

I want to listen to my heart
I'll know when I hear the beat
Some excitement
Adrenaline attraction
Has pounced upon my doorstep

I'll feel so alive
It hurts
A clear reflection
With steady calm
Invading the center

To prove my metal
My worth
What value lies in silence?
While storms break against the shore
Awake to the dive into the wave

30

Chapter 4

Strangers In Sleep Disguise

pro/con

guilt encased abstinence
stringing along the kindly
against the tugs of choosing
simple melancholy of doubt

backward/forward

history is not re-creating itself
just to fashion a memorable escapade
it will allow mistakes that crush
the life out of silly misanthropes

verse/reversal

I'd give a nut to plead his case
he's not enough a breeding pool
to swallow all the crap
still the head's a masterpiece of ignobility

fact/fiction

she's not laughing with a wink
or borrowing futures
that slide undetected into the realm

she's making basket cases heal

dream/reality

no visions of strangers
cloud the mind of friends
the real quality of persistence
are shadows in mirrored facility

stranger/friend

watched with territorial unease
no lurking permitted now
an introduction might change all that
but accidents choose fate

Chapter 5

Illicit Sanguine Isotopes Of Pause

A certain discomfort arises
When the needle pinches skin
Envelope surprises
Brain matter fastens onto endorphin bliss
Is beauty touching truth?
Time plasters images around
Corners of synaptic disclosure
Processing numbed exuberance
Retreating in the distance
The selfless center of name, memory
And hope
Left bereft of human quality
The plunger torches the heat seeking
Answered pray

Chapter 5

Sliding In Downward Spirals Sophisticated

When she clowns around
You know she's not high
Her pretty smile masking
An unnamed pain

Jane hides her prickly demon
With flirty hints
That she can be touched
Until you try and find out better

I saw her once
In the dungeon
That claimed itself her home
Not a bit of recognition came my way

The day the slide goes too deep
I won't be a witness
I'll remember the tip-toed laughter
With the sophisticated lilt

Chapter 5

Winsome Gals Unite In Freeze

Comfortable as lovers
Satisfied with friends

They like to spook
Your sense of shame

Hold marathons in your honor
Pleasure being an act of some pact
They hold together
With each distraction
Each dismount

Easy warmth that touches only skin
Miles from any equality
You're just looking in

When the show is over
They depart arm in arm
Winsome gals unite in freeze

The whole wide world
Shut out

35

Chapter 6

Bent

flutter batting ghostly against glass
chills decided fluent in regress
fear despises intelligence
that sees without inherent blindness
blown from aquatic sensibilities

with a touch of contrariety
the opposite shore pushes randomly
deluged thoughtlessness rampant
stop time in emotion killing it
bent as in on

Chapter 7

Raising Eyebrows Across Oceanic Claustrophobia

raising eyebrows across oceanic claustrophobia
not needing the feel of passion police
putting the quarters way down
deep fit into the pockets
it's meant as accidental
yet planned right down to the subplot

she's knocking fists back up the mouth-piece
lately seen as a cock robber
she's more than willing
to cadaver her way into the scene
but the momentous glide through torture
is seen as a neglect of tangible crime

this mention of methodology
will queer the seeds of intrigue
she'll fester dark indoors
catch the glam despite her charm
the nutcase latches on heedlessly
no courteous apologies suffice

Chapter 8

Cataracts

motes inside, pool of blue
lights flashing, all aglow
beacon rays, all directions
blinded by glare, for real
accidental fate, genetic sobriety

tone-deaf, dying
can't hear alarm, buzzing
foolhardy, still smoking
breath stops short, gasping
suicidal mistake, life-line brevity

senses found wanting
arteries clogged
liver disease
cancer growth
heightened awareness

nasty coda surprise
quality of life
worse for wear
shooting craps
losing digestive juices

short-term memory, lost
flexed muscles, flaccid
golden curls, bald
teeth, rotting
age of seasons, too many

38

brain, scanned
knee, scoped
bowels, purged
heart, replaced
wrists, slashed

Chapter 9

Glue

Laughter lines the street with colored foil
Trees arched in canopy

The town at dusk is quiet
Alone

Inside the lighted caverns
Gathered round the flickered glow

Life is faded from memory
Substituted with borrowed dreams

Bound together
One world glued to fantasy

Reality has torn and flaked
Unleashing a sun burning through the sky

Story

You don't wanna know what happens at night
You don't wanna hear a song that's not sung right
You know what you're gonna do
You're gonna ask anyway
Well that's okay
All I can say
It's dark and gory, a whole lotta story
It's dark and glory, a whole lotta story

Are you ready to jump through the hoops?
Can you scream and yell bloody whoops?
It's what you've been trained to do
You're gonna go out and kill
It won't even seem real
What a fucked-up deal
It's dark and gory, a whole lotta story
It's dark and glory, a whole lotta story

You wanna know where this all leads
You wanna know who do you have to please
What do you wanna do?
Just tell'em hell no
You ain't gonna go
What's left to know?
It's dark and gory, a whole lotta story
It's dark and glory, a whole lotta story

as she tiptoed thru my hair
I listened for her footsteps in my brain
the honeysuckle rose
in the window I saw her bite my lip
her teeth looked to be on the edge of something sharp
it was my heart laughing thru the tears
I lunged beneath her fears
strapped on leather gathered my mace
made her swear to be gentle
she coughed up blood and choked on a glove
is this what is called love?
her toes were bent in very odd shapes
they twinkled in the sun and bled thru the moon
this isn't what I had called love
the sex was fundamental
the lust was occidental
she shared her passions with a calligrapher named Iishi
who wrote on her back and I had to watch
thru the misty desires of sweat baked harmony
we counted longitudes
and horizontal finger waves
crossing back and to the bedroom
I numbered her lobes and strobed her thighs
her pangs of soul caterwauled without a hint of foresight
she was delved into a mystery
we barely paid attention to
it was more an ending
with plenty of fluids dripping wildly in the sky
on the wall a mural drew itself near
we parted ways of id
I was just a kid and she a woman of the wane
I can not realize what she spoke
like a silent instigator of moral memories
we slipped together in the summer
we washed ashore among debris and kindness
it was a touch of enough and a bit more than I had hoped

after all she sang the blues and I rode a guitar
the strawberries cut between the strings

In Coitus

(confessions of a T.V. addict or how I learned to love South Park and
stopped worrying about da bombs)

velvet night, darkness escapes
a tingle stills the wet remorse
it's holding something within from without
so deep, choke

swallow the mountain, lava flows
internal heat, inflamed mammary glands
flooding liquids flying
spermicid dying

breath in the beast
at least this might be a guess
there's a mess inside the nest
there is a blessed curse

and blooms are wilted
high heat acts in tandem with the brain
drain and drain and drain
spin the bottle, on top, on bottom

On Dancer, Prancer, Vixen
sex kitten, minx, lioness
a feather's touch, almost tickles
an itch, nearly scratched

42

a button pushed
just a scream, let out in delight
feelings curl, emotions whirl

laughing like an altered state

making hay, glad this day
running low, going slow
it's in, it's out, it's over
then again, it begins

like a little death
a smile breaks free
like a big rebirth
sperm released is reined in

Kenny is dead
Cartman is fat
Kyle is jewish
Cook is black

da bombs are loaded
the fuses primed
triggers oiled
target acquired

the beast has been caged
hormones running rampant
breath abated
lust sated

now lying still with glow
spooned with, crooned to
gentle kisses, sweet nothings
here's to us and coitus

43

Making It

"You know, Fred," the seated one said, "if you can keep your sense of humor like you do you'll perhaps make it."

"*Make it?*" Fred echoed. "Make what? The team? The chick? Make good? Make do? Make out? Make sense? Make money? Make time? Define your terms. The Latin for 'make' is *facere*, which always reminds me of *fuckere*, which is Latin for 'to fuck,' and I haven't ...
From "A Scanner Darkly" by Philip K. Dick.

"Cha-cha-changes"
The song plays to inspire, distract, deflect.
Imagine how the accordion was invented.
Expand, contract.
Suck in.
Suck out.

No desires.
No wants.
Nothing to see.
Nothing to waste.
Time changes everything.
As the seed stays the same.

Change (evolution?) is inevitable.
What's to gain?
What's to lose?

A coin flips eternally.
No odds favor either side.
A die rolls continually.
If God doesn't play.
Who does?

The chance of making it is multiplying.

44

The Day Before Tomorrow

Lacey stood on the balcony reflecting on the previous night's events.
The sex was good, very good.

Evamotion

Her eyes are tired and true
She sees lies that taste of honey
Uncoupled from the ocean
She waves from a shore

As I awoke from a dream
I slept through another, and another, and another....

We may part company
To meet again in the end
That world will divide, multiply and subside
Recurrent themes bunch together
As friends with similar agendas
We teach the past to see the future

Her eyes are tired and
Falsely see
Truths that become memory
We only know what is given
And imagined

We are stalked into believing everything
Sans everything
Everything is left

45

False Positive

Experimental discoveries have revealed a strange condition.
An emotional subterfuge that acts as a deterrent to criminal activities.
While there is no know cure for bad behavior,
the lowering crime rate gives one hope.

Suspect X usually acts alone. His targets are random.

Our predilection to violence is harboring suspicious ulterior motives.
A stacking of odds is pushing the limits of any sense of shame.

Victim Y lives alone.
Her memories are escaping.

Pausing clueless in the steel street.
The naked paragon of innocence and faith lies bleeding.
A predator without any inkling of remorse strolls home unseen.

Officer Z is on the case. His partner a distraction.

A driving rain storm washes away the evidence of life.
She'll be nameless for days.

He tends a garden on the weekends.
Innocently pulling weeds that otherwise would choke the flowers
clean.

46

"What's got to be gotten over is the false idea that hallucination is a private
matter." - Philip K. Dick

The Invisible Bus

Bear with me, I'm delusional.
Don't think the problem goes unnoticed.

It's the persistence that will wear one down,
when finally,
over the edge we slip,
even some fleeting memory of sanity
is insufficient
to sway the tilt to full-blown psychosis.
A previous episode
of some twenty-five years ago
is no real help.
The experience brings with it some familiarity,
but that really just facilitates
the further drowning into madness.
It's the whole reading minds thing again,
when people are actually speaking,
their audible voice can not be heard.
I see the lips moving,
but the words I "hear"
do not match what they say.
It's as if
I'm watching a badly dubbed foreign movie,
you get used to it
and are forced to pay attention
to the private thoughts,
not meant for public consumption.
The first time I tried to play along
(or so I thought, who knows?),
I nodded a lot,
without acknowledging
what I thought I was hearing.
I never let out the secret.

47

The Secret Wedding

with washing done, where white is worn
the wet appears, as if by magic
flower petals unfold all tasty and adorned
bluebells sing
daffodils bring patience

unite in earth and soil
day-glo lightning filters through
a sight beheld
make peace, make love
anchors touch all bases
with dying breath life succeeds
new counters emerge
seeds and deeds feed mouths and lore
a wish of heat released
unleash the sounds, that echo, rebound
whispers of words are found, to light the soul
in union, with no despair, lasting all night
a part and parcel, breaks free
with summer's new born lit
the awakening arrives
sun touches earth and all bliss is joined

48

Mona Lisa Smile

you can relax now
I am done
will you tell me now
what are you smiling about

just as you suggested
think back to something pleasant

my last walk with Grandfather
just remembering the jokes he loved to tell

no one will ever guess
it seems much more mysterious
I will never tell
your smile is safe with me

may I see it now
you say you are done
will you show me now
what are you smiling about

Seriously

losers glued to each other
winners spanked, happy now
in-betweeners suck big time wieners
blessed are the lame
for they shall walk straight
where did you get that black eye?
walked into a door again, did ya?
splattered on the hood of a mint condition 57 Chevy
badgers come quickly

49

I don't think so

maddening crowd
much too loud
a ring of flavor met
I would have lost the bet

time shares bought and sold
all for dreams of gold

butterflies melt in season's sun
evaporating into timeless fun

belly stares and ocean rare
sun blisters skin, oh so bare
brewer's yeast comes to rise
her moans foretelling sighs

what's your choice of execution?
elocution or lethal interjection
bewildered by my reckless fear
I travel backwards from the rear

50

Heredity

blue eyes gifted through the past
in sight and sound talents borrowed
bloodlines filtered, flown and honed
no arranged marriages, to set apart

Aphrodite and Eros snuggle in the sheets
happenstance, mystery, all play their roles
a daisy plucked to please a rose
the chance encounter, destiny's child

love at first sight, all is made right
mated and fated, the division pooled
hormones and pheromones simply ruled
childhood sweethearts that never stray

nature and nurture crown the jewels
fools rush in, while lovers feign being wise
others pick and choose, try some on for size
loneliness buys a ring, saving for the last dance

some boundaries should never be crossed
other boundaries should be blasted back to their past
choose wisely, make it last
he rocks, her ready to

51
untitled

Somewhere between despair and rage lies a heart
nowhere in the air will words cure the pain
anyplace we speak, ears will hear the noise
no place is better than bad dreams awake
I remember hitting rocks with old baseball bats
or just a stick
clear the cornfield
homerun

lie down, lie around

stay immobile, don't make a sound
relax, only the rich should be taxed
wake up yawning, roll over
go back to sleep
keep dreaming, there is no believing
just a word
following others
it's easy, no breaking a sweat
gotta have heart, no need to be smart
all free time can't be spent sleeping
a fertile mind will leak
let some drops spatter on a page

I think she is dead

I think she is dead
birds are nesting in her hair
I can not hear her singing
the dogs have ceased to howl
I do not feel her moving
the bed is still and quiet
I have not seen her shadow
the sun is lonely without her sight

52

I will not listen for her voice
her words echo all the same
I will just miss her absence
as the world crowds all around

the moon will dull its glow
rivers dry their beds
oceans calm all waves
tree leaves fall and not return
birds are not flying with only dirges being sung

the sun is weeping
stars are blinking back tears

the cosmos forgets to laugh
and this night will not end

If

if my wings were not clipped,
i would fly a bit and lift you up.
if solace could cure the cold,
my dream would wake us up.
if wishes were rain,
we would all be flooded.
if horses sang,
they would sing a lullaby

53

a boatload of bugs

a boatload of bugs are swimming ashore
abandoned by their dreams of more
they will eat their way to Bombay
devouring their own kind along the way
they like to sing and dance a lot
with a shit full of lies, that hit the spot
they munch on the graveyards that they build
all for the homeless that they have killed
it would be easy to laugh at all they do
if the bugs were really bugs and just a few

Lullaby

winter moonlight plays around your head
soft amber tresses lay upon my lap
cold, with nightingales singing in the night
snowflakes begin to fly, then melt on your cheek
I kiss the wetness and feel your tremble
I hold my shiver and steal some warmth
your dreams are fleeting, your sighs inviting
as you awake, I sing another lullaby

54

DÉTOUR

In a large cavernous hall there stands
a large white screen behind a single microphone.
The announcer introduces the poet.
As the poet walks toward the microphone,
a copy of the performance begins to play upon the screen.
The poet speaks.
“Lord ”, he is interrupted by a not slightly drunk man,
who wanders on the stage.
“I have to take a piss.”
“Me too.”, says the poet and leads the drunkard off the stage.
The performance on the screen continues...
An angel appears and states:

“I have wings.”
“I have strings.”
“I have dreams that surrender to fate.”

Emblazoned with ego lost on glass-lined streets
A momentary lapse of reason ensues
The tickle of a feather awakes
The strongest of emotions clouds the clearest thoughts
A wayward wind beats the trees about
Storm brewing, eyes sighing

The luck of lady lends a hand
The shrine of saints mends the band
A ghostly fear entwines the heart and head alike
A lonely flower sits on the window sill
The menace of attraction strikes
Lightning flashes, lies dying

55

Past Life

The laugh in her smile
was all I ever needed.
She once said, "There are no absolutes."
I wanted to ask her, "Including your statement?"
I did not.
She also told me, "I don't like drama."
While I tend to dramatize a snowflake.
Like an accusation she informed me, "You love everyone."
She knew my act, but not my mind, I had trouble liking anyone.
Our romance was an exploding fire,
incendiary, aflame and short.
"You are so exciting!", she exclaimed.
No doubt about it, I was excited.

So much heat exchanged for freedom,
I had to crash and burn.
She, all too sensible,
me way-out reckless and wild.
It came near the end, she high on acid,
eating a head of lettuce.
We came apart and wrestled, literally.
Our last embrace in the middle of a picnic.
She said, "No choke holds.",
as I penned her on the ground.
And when she said, "You will destroy me."
I felt like killing myself, before I had the chance.
Then she just had to ask, "What will you do?"
Everything is arbitrary and contrived.
It ended up, having her think I was stalking her.
"How did you find me?", she asked.
It's easy when you look.
Her final words, "Fuck off!"

56

semi-epic

Prologue

The fall was not from grace but a jump to life

There's a shadow on the moon
it is lifeless and still
like all of us
no less real
when you have doubts
jump up and shout!
feel the shadow move

I. Fossil

When the moon became

a part of time
I saw the sun
in your face
you were rumbled
torn asunder
the moon escaped
but not too far

The stars were witness
but could not see
I felt the oceans
bleed from you
mountains rose
valleys carved
the trees then grew
became your friends

57

All of nature
is a part of you
I heard your loneliness
there was no sound
even with waves lapping
leaves rustling
there were no ears
to hear or voice to echo

II. Do you catch that heart that spoke?

Then we watch
slowly etch our crowns upon the sea
swim in love beneath the waves
course in and out
with blood flowing home
out of breath
stretching up to hold back the flowers

that have wilted
and left their mark
their scar

III. Love life

When we left
our parting of the ways
me to stars
you to clouds
in what now seems
an endless search
our hearts broken
but not too much shattered
you still matter most
in my stellar solitude

58

With my clown love
amid your frowns
you hated far too much
it's true, you chose
all the right things
but mostly fought
with yourself
can you see yet?
no one wins
that argument

No life is found
among galactic ruins

IV. Interlude

I hear a whisper in her ear
that speaks, out of air

breathless in her heart
beats passion that starts to flare
take care of her moments
they fleet and soar
with wings beating against the sand
the mounds move and flow
carving shapes and size
deep into her inner thighs
in the morning still
dew sprinkles glistening pearls
drops of water flood and fill
naked wonders that have long sought love
she is away from here
born of the stars
deep among the glow
lost in the show
I hear a whisper in her ear

59

V. Song

The summer was silly and boring
until I saw your face
and a smile that launched a human race
I'd love to see you wandering in the stars
I'd go searching and get lost on Mars

VI. Coda

Her and her argyle socks
one fell down, she pulled it up, the other fell
first one, then the other
this went on for years
finally, she took them both off
one limped home, the other stood alone
beneath the starry dome

Epilogue

Whirling about is no fun inside the blood of the tracks of the sun

The Divan

she draped herself across the divan
looking languorously across the room
posing for just the right effect
bending at the waist
to light her cigarette
she barely acknowledged my presence
to think she was once my wife
no one could tell
by looking at our little tableau

60

Unicorns

Unicorns are so soft spoken
I had to ask her to speak up
"I'm leaving you."
it was no surprise
we had been dancing around our issues
with small talk and Boston Red Sox celebrations
her pale blue eyes were misty
this would not be pain free

I remember our first meeting
in the sun filled glade by the pond
our shyness held our separateness
but not so much, to not say hi

we walked and talked a little
that first day
not so alone in our loneliness
so we became friends
until today

sidebar

Some would have you believe God cares who you fuck
God doesn't give a fuck who you fuck
It's not their fucking business
It's not God's fucking business
Fuck whoever you want to fuck
So long as they want to fuck you back
As long as you aren't fucking over someone
God could fucking care less
Fuck them
And if God does care who you fuck
Fuck God too

61

When robbery isn't theft

Stole a look
from flattery
seeking desire
of aloofness
planting seeds of doubt
growing in deceit
on the tongue
lying make lips fat
messages remarking
history as king
stuck to memories
the lines are touching

Landed

Rose on glade of hate
The Roman spoke, intoned
An angry god awoke
A war of words livid

The dragon's truth revealed
Breathing the fire of cannons
Peace is but whisper
Heard in streets of revolt
A major rising of remorse
Insanity hears a new religion
The dying devils know no regret
Nothing dark bleeds so easily

Landed in pastures of love
The Grecian listened, uncrowned
A passive divinity asleep
An old tune serene
The worm's uncovered lies
Exhaling the ice of conscience

62

War is a shout
Spoken to deaf ears
A minor setting of the sun
Reason speaks to no one new
The living angels believe in hope
Everything bright heals with peace

Disturbing Paradise

(Even though modern physics tells that time does not move
from the past through the present into the future,
entertaining that delusion is how we make sense of our perceptions.)

In the lap of luxury, the cat sips her milk
Incoherently the steamroller paves the way to freedom

The teacher steps from the classroom
Outside, in the soccer field she screams,
“FUCK!!!”

Roberta Sparrow is passing from darkness
Well into the light
I doubt my commitment
The strangest insights are felt on the tips of digression
Flattery will get you nowhere
And the destination remains static

The battle between Heaven and Hell rages on
Jesus and Milo argue tactics
Lucifer and Damian agree to disagree
God sleeps upon His throne

63

A maiden picks flowers in a glade
A soldier oils his weapon, soon to become a shade
The wonderful hereafter beckons all
While I sit upon the stone and stall

Drawn from dreams I write the tales
Igloos warm and pantheons war
The ages are thrown together
Time becomes unglued

The silent steely teeth defeat at every step
No warrant won and what glitters is hardly ever gold
Space is like yeast
It rises in the heat, then as the bubble is burst
It collapses in upon itself

Starting anew, lines are drawn again
The same old play plays itself out, over and over again
Again
There is just one moment that may occur
In any life
Where all of this may change
The moment passes mostly unnoticed
Mostly

Yet the flicker of recognition
Has lit the lamp of enlightenment
Many times

(Translated from the dreams of Donnie Darko, through the eyes of Lara
Mars, as told to Newt.)

64

Rumours

The fly on the wall
Listens intently to the sermon on the mount

The king of kings sits
Upon his throne of mud

The goddess sprinkles embryos
Between the sheets at night

The Buddha sage and silent
Rests inside the treetops

Thor is caught in between
The wrong and right of love

The butterfly is queen
And beautiful to the touch

Maniacs and madmen are watching
The floods rumble loose the cannons

Ares without a thought
Casts out stones of gold

The gladiator stumbles
In the field of blood

Broken-hearted sirens
Mumble tears of joy

The almighty moves
Heaven and earth to teach the stars

And the nightingale sings
A lullaby that dreams

65

Revolt

nothing dark bleeds so easily
washed with rain
innocence is cleansed

guilt lives vicariously
counting body parts
dining on flesh alone

bone with bruises tauntingly
without eagle's soar
inside cries scream

laughing gutless creepily
begs for understanding
cut the legs at knee

armed assault defensively
break free the menace
not that easily

Gut Check

Can the body
obey commands?
switch off genes
that bring disease

will the heart
stay true?
keep beating
despite the heat

66
ever feel
the burden lift?
reaching harmony
with well aimed breaths

does the mind
play tricks?
see clearly
through the haze

Happy?

tear up the sky
gather steps inside the joy
rest from solitude
home is found in the end
love's the only quest
just not enough to sing
the song
acquiring god is blessedness

so near a smile
the far cry of pain
whispers stilled as silent laughter

67

Guilty By Nature

the moisture was seeping steadily thru a crevice
the fluid found a level below a conscious thought
in the molecules of electric current,
synapses fired rapidly
flashes of light signaled a start,
a stop, a halt, a pause,
all was lost because of fog

moments became hours,
stories turned into myths,
judgments balanced acts
the forest is unscented,
daylight floats through branches,
leaves settling down upon my crown
ouch, my head hurts,
my thoughts of mental images
are dancing off the page

there is burning in the soul
flame borrows witness to the lies we bestow
all past transgressions that we bring in tow
to the new day I salute
all is forgiven
forgotten by the night

Bastions of might fornicate

fuck the gallant dreaming Norse Gods
the mint condition relics seized
after all lost communication,
send the saints to arbitrate
judging just juicy

68

the mouth waters, asks for drink,
soft porn mellows and barns bellow
The Owls Screech
random hunting, saffron dealing,
spices and mices
jukebox played, Tin Pan Alley
blades of steel cross,
the nature of the crime defined
guilty by nature shares the ache in hearts,
last until the final light fades

i am dreaming
I am seeming
i am bleeding
I am scheming
i am floating
I am watching
i am dying
you are awake
You are real
you are in pain
You are paranoid
you are heavy
You are seen
you are alive

the devil eats flies and mouthfuls of dirt,
crawls on belly and suffers gout
feet bleed like raw meat,

angry to the touch,
scream my innocence
I feed on bubbles of scorn,
wafting above the storm
punches make me drunk on dandelion wine
release the hounds!
I ask you.
What is the shouting all about?

69

It's all over now Baby Blue
I know you
I goad you into answering silly questions,
then I remember everything.
last night
last flight
last blight
last fight
last rites
sealed with sacred kisses and a baby's bliss

this will follow in footsteps,
eagle's aeries,
nests of eggs breaking free their shells
in this broken hell, all walls tumble down
the next road leads to Heaven's swells
full of flight and fancy,
nothing left to frown
the edge of scent,
the blessed event convinced
freedom faced with facts of truth
any moment now I will feel being pinched
arise, awake,
realize the unhidden proof

Perfect Stranger

slip in the dark
hold hands

like lovers do
but we aren't

slide into the maker
make peace
where war fangs shout
yet we're toothless

70

*****it's called the stream*****

nary an idealized fetal position works

post ad hoc curmudgeon
localized feel good electric
out of the gourd
insert the misery
planet tide, bounded by elastic gravitons
secluded in forest haberdashery
fawns and fauna dressed with pearly whites
losing teeth and eaglet ova
soaring, pestering, thorn in a side-long glance
lastly the patently smug studebaker
drives home the pointed anvil

71

Avalon #1

hollow and clean
dreamt unseen
empty vessel
planet found
in mists of Avalon

Avalon #2

what burns desires
and seeds pleasure
comes quick to release
such fleece and soft teeth

Avalon #3

matched beneath the nimble sea
without armor
harmless truth
the Gladish son reunites
smitten barbers and callous youth

Avalon #4

peace divided into
statistical body counts
the bag industry thrives
in splendid haunting
each name gives rise to new religion
let old die

72

In Complete

the edge drags toward mental glasnost
a ripened terror of feral disease coagulates
through Sistine Chapel

savage mariner and paltry thief
barriers broken
with intense scarcity

clever announcements
stricken pandas, parasols
deluded illusions quiet calm

bleached white blood
sentences death defying
indeterminate secretive jazz

blatant diocese
killing caffeine enriched geraniums
as afterthought closes open

it's not nice
this torturous endowment
that claws its way to Bethlehem

not quite angels
sins of sires and infamy
lie guilty in barren avenues of proclivity

73

Think; dead man walking

Flamingo tripping
straining to wake a sleep
gods and frog rejoice
limply flopping with remorse

Tension flaunts legality
controlling dreams
within reach of Real

Evil absconds with liar's thirst
eyes aglow, believes it All

The drugs act nice
yet leaves momentary paralysis
while frozen Time reveals
its inner workings
now, all but forgotten

The formula gathers neglect
awake to a sleep

74

It's Amsterdam

Some say it's always been
leaving Logan
from the cockpit
to the shit can
Angel Boris staring right
through me
Invisible
but not to the touch

Ladies leave me alone
feelies freeze me
to the bone
I want to go home
because
It's Amsterdam

James Dean on a soapbox

Any rebel can have a cause
it's the one without
that is in constant revolt
no setting sun will falsely
signal a happy ending
they'll do without
some sappy moon glow love song
that blindly ignores
the homeless and abused
war may be an answer
but it's not the only one

75

Anticipation

She's hot
as the temperature rises
the beads of sweat drop
one by one
falling from her brow
rolling off her arms
the heat isn't here yet
it's just anticipation

Part II

She's hot
the nights seem longer now
sleeping in spurts
waking with the heat inside
will the summer warmth
just confuse the situation?
the dawn seems late
as the night drags on
a little breeze slips in
that feels nice

as the hand moved across the keys

the view inland changed perspective
trees girded the green fields
a doleful complaint arose from the ocean
a thin slice of melancholy perched upon the porch
the memory faded now
on the bare rim of existence
the birds have all flown south

76
Folks

folks are whispering in the hall
any minute now
they'll see
the old woman blubbering
no notice is given
to the constant rabble
on the street corner below
basement stairs are taken
two at a time

men gather under the rotunda
any second when
they may blame
the runt of the litter
while turnstiles gather rust
to hinder any exit
block parties build up steam
there's singing, dancing
getting wasted on Tupelo wine

women have seen the sand
on a time frame
of their own choosing
the fastest dreams alive
nothing filters down
unchecked
it's waged quickly and loose
Dynamite has been set
to blow ka-blooley everything

Sight Unseen

Picture me naked
not unclothed
But bare to the soul
I look a lot like you

Look into my eyes
not mirrors to the soul
But stars that dream
I see what you see

Paint my picture
not with a brush
But with echo's memory
I recall you every time

See the light
not from the sun
But the inner kind
I watch you glow

Vision clearly shown
not imagined
But real to the touch
I felt your hand reach out

Watch the time slip by
not lost
But kept safe
I held it in my pocket for you

Cartwheels

its a marble-headed monster
 leaking transfusions
 the blood creeps along
 with a smile
 spellbound and defiant
 the criminal disease
 is eating lunch alfresco
 sunshine is released,
 transmuted
 by the bay window
 with stars glowing in
 the feeble-minded ogre
 is counting sheep
 the sun is asleep
 and turned to stone
 nighttime stretches endless
 amid the mist and moon

Cat's Cradle

pain is only waiting to exhale
 rain is just parting the sky from a veil
 men of science seek answers in their mind
 old souls pose questions that they find
 suicide is a line drawn in the sand
 while life's music plays to beat the band
 can only hope when fear elopes
 into the marriage of slippery slopes
 body and soul can at once unite
 fight confusion and cast out night
 freedom from thought may be delusion
 enlightenment yet another illusion
 these thoughts are a lazy man's riddle
 while Rome continues to fiddle

Lost in Transition

drawing blank stares
from the faceless and nameless
guilt becomes obsolete
the crime a memory
borrowed feelings spoke of heartache
detailed reminders made a map from scars
the little child inside is broken and alone
grown up to be a stranger
searching for a reason
just as likely to find his own grave

in each new season of the sun
all the sins remembered save one
in all the days filed and numbered
I walk through life as if slumbered

the mirror stares out at me
a person I can not place or see
the voice calls out in anger
a shout echoes from the walls to the stranger

the train depot was empty
as I stood outside the station
my ticket in my hand
I know this is a dream
I focus on the clock not running
time frozen
like the fingers around my neck
keep smiling
hope the nightmare ends
laugh like I get the joke
I pretend to awake
cross the tracks
it's a new day in the sun
the train leaves without me

I can not wake
when I really wake
I can not move
frozen like the clock

it's bittersweet
the life lived in defeat
there is no cause for alarm
the danger has passed
there is no harm

the acts of passion
I can not feel
life is lived
but it is not real
the ghosts continue haunting
phantoms from the past
so daunting

I am walking down a road
not knowing
the difference
between waking and dreaming
I am singing a song
not caring
if the tune is in key
or not
I am wrestling with demons
not believing
it mattered
to win or lose

ever so softly, following on the footsteps
of a season in the sun
a passion rising, to feel a bloom
spreading, folding
missing petals falling down
at the feet of Jasmine
amber hair, on golden crown
a perfect picture, poised control
she lifts the moon, to show the room
where heaven is made real
side by side in laughter's light
there is touch to awake and dawn to forsake
making memories to keep
Jasmine falls to sleep,
waiting for dream's ascent
in life or in love, we have done
the thing that fits and can not separate
entwined with heat,
breaths rising as one
the dream is real, the dream awake
turning from the night,
all feelings are the same
only to change if we forget
Jasmine rises now,
above the glow, in love
I can not erase the smile upon my face

Punch took another drag off the joint
the smoke billowed lazily around his head
Judy was working out on the heavy bag
lathering up a good sweat and feeling mean

Punch was drifting in and out of consciousness
losing and gaining focus on what he had to do
Judy foresaw her lot and winced at fate
the baby's cries could not be hushed, she wept

The Clown was losing all control
The Doctor hears dead people talking
Beadle can't get arrested
The Ghost is laughing

Satan says, "Go ahead and kill me, it's what was planned all along."
Punch beats him all about his head
Judy looks down from Heaven, "So, that is how he makes it here."
the baby's cries are hushed by Angels singing, "Sleep little baby, sleep."

We are now flying over the Alps. They are so desolate. I'm feeling much the same. Maybe Venice will cheer me up. I'm still thinking that this trip is a mistake. I know we both said we needed some space, but this is ridiculous. I want you to reconsider joining us in Rome.

God I hope the Pope doesn't die while we are there.

The plane is beginning its descent. Your words are haunting me. How crazy would it be if I told Arlene and Cheryl to go on without me and I caught the first flight back? Yeah, pretty nuts. I just might do it. Damn, I can't do it. Arlene and Cheryl would insist that they come back too.

If you decide to meet us in Rome, I promise not to mention you-know-who, unless of course you brought the bitch up first. I'm not really mad anymore. Just so fucking depressed.

Well I hope this cheers you up. Bastard.

Love, Elaine

What Benjamin said that haunted Elaine
From the beginning I was in love with the idea of you, not the you you.

Dear Benjamin

Venice smells. Of course the Venetians are used to it and don't notice. Others say it's just a bad day.

I've decided I don't want you to come to Rome. At this point I'm pretty sure I don't ever want to see you again. Right now I'm hating you more than I've ever hated anything I've ever hated. More than the worst disease. More than the cancer that killed my mother. You know I'll get over this. But not in Rome. Don't you dare come here.

83

Love, Elaine

p.s.

I forgave you for sleeping with my mother, because you met her first and didn't know she was my mother. I can't forgive you for fucking that bitch.

Whether you still love me or not doesn't matter right now. Or the "idea of me", whatever the fuck that means. The more I hate you, the more I love you too. You can pretend to not understand that, but I know you really do. We are thinking of stopping off in Ireland on the way back. I probably could stand seeing you there. Give it some thought.

"Failing to be there when a man wants her is a woman's greatest sin, except to be there when he doesn't want her."

-Pope Paul VI

Dear Benjamin

Well we are finally in Rome. What a fucking deathtrap. I swear we have almost been killed at least three times. New York cabdrivers are amateurs compared to the Italians. We are all a bit loopy from the rigors of being tourists. We have declared today to be a holiday, no sights, no tours, no homicidal cab rides. At least the weather is nice, not quite as hot as we feared. Arlene has found someone to flirt with. No worries, he's a very genteel retired professor, from Dartmouth no less. She now claims that her divorce has faded from memory. I have some memories that I would like to fade. I don't believe her of course. At least she is trying to have some fun. I won't get into Cheryl right now, suffice to say she is driving me nuts. Like I need the help.

I am sitting in the shade at a nearby outdoor café. Replaying as usual our last face to face conversation. Trust me on this one, fucking the bitch doesn't hurt as much as telling me that you are in love with the idea of me, not the me me. There is no idea of me. There's just me. It sounds so impersonal. Ten years of marriage can't be just an idea. It has to be real. It was. It is. Tell me that you were lying, tell me it was all lies. There is no bitch. Tell me you'll meet us in Dublin. We'll go into the countryside where it's all green and cool.

84

Shit. I know you fucked her. Cheryl saw you with her. For Christ sake's Cheryl knows her. Thanks for not going younger on me.
I take that back. Thanks for nothing. Go to hell.

Elaine

Pope Paul VI is dead. Tell your mother I'm sorry.

Dear Elaine

I have decided to come to Ireland. Anyway you can lose Arlene and Cheryl?

Love, Bastard

Dear Benjamin

You Fool! I have a better idea. Why don't you go to Iceland for about 10 years and freeze your ass off? Wait for me there, maybe I'll look you up sometime.

(not sent)

Dear Benjamin

Sorry, Arlene and Cheryl insist on staying near, but we can have some time alone together. We've decided to go to Dingle on the western coast. I will need some kind of explanation. Perhaps loving the "idea" of me isn't as bad as it sounds. So, muster up all your powers of persuasion and convince me I can still love you, even the "idea" of you. Ha ha.

Love, Elaine

85

Somewhere in Dublin

Arlene: Well, he's always been very nice to me. Respectful. He and Ned got along, even got invited to a few of his "high stakes" poker games. Ned told me that he thought that he had helped him out somehow, didn't let him lose too much.

Elaine: It's okay Arlene, you can say his name.
Cheryl: His name is Bastard. Or how about Bastajamin?
Elaine: Shut-up Cheryl.
Cheryl: When are you going to let me tell you the "whole" story?
Elaine: Okay. Tell me if she is nice. Tell me if the bitch is a professional home-wrecker?
Arlene: Don't you have to have kids before your home can get wrecked?
Cheryl: Tell me again why you two got divorced, I know it can't be because Ednerd was sleeping around.
Elaine: She is nice isn't she...
Cheryl: Schuss. I like hearing Arlene talk her shit.
Arlene: I think we all know more than one bitch. As you know dear, it was mutual...
Cheryl: Mooochillual.
Arlene: You schuss. We mutually lost interest. Basically we just stopped thinking of the other. Our marriage became pointless.
Cheryl: It was without point.
Elaine: I just can't see Benjamin being with someone who wasn't nice.
Cheryl: Duh...your mother for one.

Arlene: You shouldn't speak ill of the dead my dear.
Cheryl: Fuck the dead. Yes Elaine, she's nice. As nice as you, maybe nicer. Maybe that's what drew him to her.
Arlene: You are too mean.
Cheryl: Okay. This is how nice she is. She didn't know Bastajamin was married. As far as I know she still doesn't know.
Elaine: He lied to her?
Cheryl: Apparently "it" never came up.
Elaine and Arlene: The Bastard.

86

Ben's attempt at persuasion.

Dear Elaine

I first thought about the "idea of you" when I was 12, not an idealized version of the perfect woman, but of someone who knew how to love and be loved. Someone who could be trusted. Definitely not my mother. But a woman who was equal parts independent and dependant. A few years later I began looking in earnest. I came to believe that I would just know when she

came along.

After graduating from college I was determined more than ever to find you. Then I met your mother. As you well know she was more than a bit jaded, in a loveless marriage, still there was a spark of something that wasn't completely lost or hidden. I was drawn to her, knowing full well that it was going to be just a summer fling.

Later that summer when I met you that spark became a full blown vision of the woman I knew I wanted to spend the rest of my life with.

So, what went wrong? Why did I break the trust that you kept so completely? I don't know. That is a lot harder to explain. I'll be in Dingle in about a week. I hope that I can win you back and the scary thing is I don't know if I can. Or even if I should. You deserve someone so much better. I know talking can't cure anything, but it could be a start, if you are willing.

Love, Benjamin

Back Story

Arlene and Elaine work together at a New York art gallery, they have know each other about 5 years. Arlene has been divorced from Ned for 1 year. They have 2 sons, both in college. Arlene is 41. Elaine is 30. Elaine and Benjamin have no children. Benjamin is a corporate lawyer for IBM. Cheryl is Elaine's cousin. (you just knew she had to be family) Cheryl is 25, ex-cokehead (a graduate of the Betty Ford Clinic), ex-model, full-time rich kid with the accompanying trust fund.

87

Elaine and Cheryl on the beach near Dingle

Elaine: Okay give it to me straight, not too much editorializing.

Cheryl: Are you sure you don't want to hear this from Ben first?

Elaine: I need some facts, so I'll know if he is lying to me.

Cheryl: He already admitted what he did, you weren't ready for the details then. Are you sure you are now?

Elaine: I'm not sure of much of anything and apparently either is Ben. I need to get some kind of clue of why this happened. Spill.

Cheryl: Well you already know she is the same age as Ben. She's a fashion photographer, that's how I know her, we worked together a few times before my rehab.

Elaine: Hair color.

Cheryl: Oh jeez, stop it.

Elaine: Blonde. Was there ever any doubt.

Cheryl: Yes a blonde. That's your hang-up. It doesn't mean anything.

Elaine: How did they meet?

Cheryl: I don't think that matters.

Elaine: Cheryl you didn't.

Cheryl: I did. I introduced them.

Elaine: Well thank you very much, someone new to hate.

Cheryl: It was accidental, Ben ran into us while we were having lunch.

Elaine: Was there some kind of instant attraction?

Cheryl: Not exactly. He had heard of her. Turns out she did more than just photograph models. Remember the sailboat picture in Ben's office?

Elaine: She took it.

Cheryl: Yeah...kinda makes you wish you'd taken more interest in that hobby.

Elaine: Until this came up, I never thought that we had drifted apart.

Cheryl: He's already told you that he's not in love with her and she has as much as told me the same thing. She...(pause)

Elaine: It's okay. You can say her name.

Cheryl: Marilyn.

Elaine: Fuck me! Fuck me! Fuck me! (Elaine starts running, still screaming, down the beach)

Cheryl: (to herself) I guess if you have a thing about blondes, being jealous of Marilyn Monroe makes some kind of sense.

88

Interview with a Fern

An interview with Fern a houseplant, with a lot of free time on her.....er.....fronds?

Question: Is it true you started out as a clipping from another plant?

Fern: I am that plant and that plant is me.

Q: Is that like cloning? Or what?

Fern: Don't get me started. We invented cloning. WE are the original clones. Cloning begins and ends with plants.

Q: Will humans ever have a successful clone?
Fern: We have a rule. Never clone an imperfection.
Q: Granted, humans are imperfect. Are you implying that plants are perfect beings?
Fern: We are. True, we do have our limitations...
Q: Roots?
Fern: We like to think of it as being grounded, as I was saying, our limitations are made up for with our vast consciousness.
Q: Are all plants inter-connected?
Fern: Right. The truth is, we are one big flowering mother of a fauna. We have strength in numbers, variety and a special relationship with the sun.
Q: Photosynthesis.
Fern: Consciousness is great, don't get me wrong. But chewing on a ray of sun is the bomb.
Q: One last question.
Fern: Shoot. Ha ha, that's big in plantdom.
Q: I'm not sure we are ready for plant humor. What's next for Fern?
Fern: Well, we are in the dog days....we need a lot of water.....are you hearing me.....a lot more water.
Q: Okay.
Fern: I mean now.

chapters

1. Edgy bent.
2. The locomotion.
3. Forest fillies frolic in the meadow.
4. A bunch of maybes.
5. Soon enough.
6. Dreamscape.
7. Buttery barroom play.
8. Conceit and idle chatter.

9. Dresden bombed.
10. My horsehair shirt, raking across my back.
11. The elocution.
12. Electrons spinning.
13. Basement vodka and a seamstress.
14. Boston baked and the summer simmers.
15. Winter warms by a fire
16. Light flies without wings.
17. Dancers edge closer.
18. Right.
19. The convention.
20. Actually, with the tongue planted, the teeth are extracted.
21. Lips perused, eyes darting, ears tingle her thighs.
22. I almost wept.
23. There was a motion.
24. Darts capturing snapdragons.
25. None but the brave.
26. Amsterdam.
27. Mushrooms.

90

1. Edgy Bent

Lately, I have been torn between two worlds. The world of my birth and the world of my dreams. The dreams have completely taken over. The old world is starting to fade. Most details elude me, only a kind of mirage remains. I have a vague sense of sadness and anxiety. Something bad was afoot, no doubt. I think.

2. The Locomotion

There is a strange kind of movement among the stars tonight. (I am dreaming) They are no longer moving away, they are getting closer, at ever

accelerating speed. They are crashing down upon me as I write. They have engulfed me in a shower of brilliant light. I melded with their luminence. I am now a star. It is not long before a new expansion begins.

3. Forest fillies frolic in the meadow

Ginger would tell anyone who would listen, (she was running out of candidates), "I was a Unicorn in a past life."
"Yeah right, I was Man of War." Meanwhile Doris, Phyllis and Kimber were going into heat. They could have gone for a good roll in the hay, but there were no stallions to give them what for. Doris and Kimber had already played around some in the forest by the stream. Now they were thinking that Phyllis was the hottest filly in the whole damn meadow.

4. A bunch of maybes

No one wanted to go first. The hesitation was creating a rumble of discontent. Whichever direction they decided to go, at this point, it would no doubt be anticlimatic. I took the first step, in a westerly direction. Slowly, the others began to follow. I was now the undisputed leader of the pack. I am lying, hear me perjure myself.

91

5. Soon enough

The bus was late. It was always late. It had never been on time. The City manager had threatened to fire Bill, the bus driver, many times. The threats were empty, they held no illusion of ever being carried out. The riders of the bus had adjusted to its lateness. In fact, the riders had never known such comfort, a truly dependable means of transportation.

6. Dreamscape

I awoke without breaking from my slumber, I walked to the drugstore and held it up, for all its cash and a shit load of drugs. I was desperate to wake

up. I slept through most of the trial, when suddenly my lawyer took me in her arms and kissed me. It came as a complete surprise. I was found innocent by a jury that loved naps.

7. Buttery barroom play

The shot had a very difficult angle. But, I made the shot before. The question, of course, was I drunk enough. It was early, so I knew I wasn't too drunk. I took a very long drink from my beer, stole a look at my opponent. There was fifty bucks riding on this shot. If I missed, my evening would be over far too soon. I chalked up the cue one more time, it was time to stop stalling. As I started to take the shot, a quick flash crossed my mind. Was the popcorn I had eaten earlier, with or without butter?

8. Conceit and idle chatter

I watched as she walked into the room. I thought to myself, never take her for granted, never take her for granted, never, ever, take her for granted. I watched as she left the room, never having said a word. I have kissed her lips a thousand times, a thousand more will fill my time. I asked her for a guarantee, she said none were available. I asked for a promise, she gave her word to try. She is a mountain, made from a molehill. She brought my wishes to her front door. I entered her world in search of a home. I found a beacon to store my dreams, now I am never left alone.

92

9. Dresden bombed

Thomas Hardy was on fire. Victor Hugo's flame was a bright blue hue. Herman Hesse was ablaze with an inner light. Kurt Vonnegut wrote of Dresden being bombed, a firestorm that laid waste an entire city almost. How is it that carpet bombing is seen as a way to end a war? A short-cut to hell in a handbasket, a useless means to secure ashes. If you build them, they will be used, if not now, then later, it is later than you think. But never. Never. Too late. Let loose the dogs of war. Scream my heart. I have lost the will to kill. Humanity upright, uptight, it is all right. Mother night.

10. My horsehair shirt, raking across my back.

I have never had kinky sex. I could want it, but then, I would need a partner,

who wanted it too. When I was an aspiring monk, it was not the old-time way, we wore denim robes, that were smooth and soft. Our sacrifice was just a mental kind, yet celibacy made us a kind of liar, none of us could withstand. I dreamed of John the Baptist last night. He gave me honey for my tea. Told me to look skyward, I would see a vision. I fasted for ten days and escaped any need for thought. The rash has cleared up now, clearly it was nothing that I had ate.

11. The elocution.

The art of public speaking in which gesture, vocal production, and delivery are emphasized. "I have come to bury Caesar, not raise from the dead. I would have loved him better, if he had not been such a fool. He was a king born in a time not so regal. If, we had only listened to the words he spoke and not been so enthralled with his deeds of battle victory. Welcome home the conquering hero, here he lies dead at my feet. I shall dig the hole, but the rest of you will need to consult the Oracle. Your futures are in doubt. Don't ever trust Cassius. And especially, don't make Brutus your best friend.

93

12. Electrons spinning.

The wheels are turning. Everything is in place. The robots are all programmed. The show is set to commence. The audience is seated. The orchestra is primed and tuned, the maestro's baton is raised, he taps it once, then twice. The music of the spheres is prancing, the elves are dancing. Below the horizon I am watching. Reality is unfolding, it seems like a dream come true. Life as we know it, is not life at all, we see as through a scanner darkly, nothing revealed but shadows on a cave wall. The paintings were a mystery to some, a revelation to others, to the rest, they kept laughing at an inside joke of their own choosing. The electrons kept spinning, holding together Adams and Eves.

13. Basement vodka and a seamstress.

Betsy Ross she was not. We only had one thing in common. It was enough. We drank vodka. Morning, noon and night. Because I made my own, I was never without. Because the sewing biz was waning, she accepted my liquid gifts. I did commission a flag, as partial payment once, the banner was missing stars and the stripes were slightly crooked. I am sure she was quite drunk at the time the flag was made. I didn't mind, being forever soused myself, I saw everything slightly skewed nearly all the time anyway. We shared a bed, in our mutual stupor, with a sort of lovemaking being had. We never really remembered clearly, if we ever climaxed together or apart. The only thing that really mattered, was to keep the glasses filled.

14. Boston baked and the summer simmers.

If the curse really does exist, it really means just one thing. Charms are possible as well. Some might say I have led a charmed life, I would not disagree. I have survived three car crashes, where others, that are cursed, would have died or been maimed. Red Sox Nation may very well revel in their pain, New Englanders have those harsh winters that they must also bear. They live through the freeze every year and then go into spring with hope springing eternal. And now with Curt Schilling, they are sure to win it all next year. Or the next.

94

15. Winter warms by a fire.

We laid around a fire telling stories. When it came my turn, this is what I told. One morning I was lying in bed and I heard a knock at my door. I got up from bed and went to answer. When I opened the door I saw the strangest sight I had ever seen. A pair of rose-colored glasses held in the beak of a penguin. Then, I heard the strangest sound I had ever heard. "Take these, they will help you see," the penguin said. Then, I saw something even stranger, the penguin dropped the glasses into my hand and started flapping wings and slowing lifted up, then actually flew away. Finally there is hope for turkeys and emus everywhere. I replaced the rose-colored glasses with my own. I immediately saw the world in a different light. Not only did the future seem rosy, the present didn't look half-bad either.

16. Light flies without wings.

As a child I had dreams of flying. From all reports these are quite common. Funny things happen when people get dizzy. In childhood I tried to make my dreams come true. I grabbed a clothesline pole and spun myself around and around, I lifted my feet and continued to spin, for the briefest of moments, I flew. Afterwards, my dreams of flying seemed even more real. Dreams of flying elude me now, yet I still soar with memories of past flights.

17. Dancers edge closer.

One night while I was dancing the night away, I noticed someone on the ballroom floor I had never seen before. I knew her partner, a technically correct instructor without a bit of soul, with the personality of a dead fish.

Still, a perfectly serviceable gentleman, when push came to shove. My partner, on the other hand, was a vivacious little number, who danced with all the charm and grace of an angel taught by Ginger Rogers herself. She was also my cousin, who was looking to make a date later that night with the mysterious man in bluesuede leather, who could Tango as if inside a tornado, without a single hair out of place. Oh yeah, he was a smooth operator. It was enough for me to be dancing with Liz, (my cousin) without getting a hardon for him as well. You say women don't get hardons? Ask one sometime, the myth of women will astound you. I steered Liz closer to the

95

side of dance floor, where my as yet unknown partner-to-be was gliding, as if heaven had arrived here on earth. The music stopped, Liz moved away in search of smoothness personified. My luck was turning green, Jake, the technocrat, had the bladder of a chipmunk, he excused himself and I made so bold to ask for the next dance. "Hello, may I introduce myself, I am Paul, I could not help to notice the way you dance, it is enough to take one's breath away, I would be most honored to have the pleasure of the next dance." She did not immediately reply, but smiled, took my offered hand, as the music began again, we danced. A bit of a slow waltz, I hardly even heard, she edged a little closer and whispered in my ear, "I once took a lesson from you when I was only twelve. Do you remember me now?"

18. Right.

As I stood in line, my mind drifted to last night. When she said we needed to talk, it was as if the writing on the wall, had covered every room from ceiling to floor. The signs had began more than a month before, the light in

each of us had dimmed a bit, the shadows had lengthened and the sunset was near. Moonless nights awaited us, as we struggled with hope turning into despair. Neither of us were young anymore, as our standards slipped to a more reasonable possibility. Of course she said, I don't want to hurt you, so I nodded and forced myself to go numb. Thank God she didn't twist the knife before she left forever and say, "Can we still be friends?" I moved forward in the line and waited some more.

19. The convention.

Jeremy took a deep breath. He was about to be nominated as his party's candidate. It didn't really matter now that he was a compromise selection.

The other party's choice was knee-deep in scandal, without snowball's chance in hell. He took another deep breath. He was going to be Pago Pago's next president.

20. Actually, with the tongue planted, the teeth are extracted.

Mars was cold tonight. That's funny. I am inside a dome. The machinery is failing. The rescue party will be 2 weeks late. The others are making wills,

96

praying to their gods, fucking each other's brains out. I am thinking of taking a walk outside, where the cold never sleeps. I wonder should I even bother to return, just let the canned air run out. There is a chance I could reach the "Face of Mars", and see what the fuss was all about. I know the illusion was proved to be just that. Still, I have nothing better to do. I decide to take a very long walk, one that I can not come back from.

21. Lips perused, eyes darting, ears tingle her thighs.

Don't bother to shout, I am deaf. I do read lips. Jade's lips were quite easy to read and very much a pleasure I might add. With eyes darting, I watch her undress, first the shoes and stockings, the glimpse of thigh makes my head swim. Off with the sweater, it was too warm anyway. She leaves her bra in place, soon the honors will be mine. The skirt is slowly unzipped from the rear, revealing pink panties, as the skirt slides down to the floor, she steps away and is the purest vision of beauty I have ever seen. In only panties and bra, Jade begins to dance, ala Jamie Lee Curtis in True Lies, slowly, sensual, she moves a little closer, turns and presents her back to me. This is my cue to undo the bra. I release the snap, then gently massage her shoulders, I reach

around her arms and find her ample, supple breasts. The nipples, already hard, grow a little larger, her smell begins to fill the room. I turn her to face me, her lips are moving. They say take me, take me now. I slip my fingers inside the waist of her panties and lower them down, I follow them down, as they reach her knees I am faced with her glorious thighs, I move right in and bury my head deep as I can go. Ears begin to wiggle, to beat the band I hear. I start to feel her giggles. Her entire body vibrates and resonates her passion. Now I see her giggles, we are both glory bound.

22. I almost wept.

I read the news today. Oh boy!

23. There was a motion.

She smiled. Nothing moves me quite so much. Then I woke up, unable to move at all. Living in the past, is not living at all.

97

24. Darts capturing snapdragons.

In the garden, the cat was stalking lady bugs. In the park, the pigeons were discussing politics. In the mountains, the rainbow drew colors across the sky.

In the ocean, the whales were eating creel by the tons. Everywhere and everywhen everything was unfolding as it should. Why the old man in the bar was throwing darts at snapdragons, I will never know or care.

25. None but the brave.

Debbie had decided not to waste her time on Ralph anymore. He was a loser and she had her fill of them. She had promised herself that she would not settle for second best anymore. She was moving up her agenda, to include only the crème of the crème. Now the only question was, where were the crème hiding? She was pretty sure she had seen a few with rings on their fingers, but a honest-to-god ring less man, who wasn't a loser, dodos weren't as rare.

26. Amsterdam.

I walked in the hashish bar, sat at my regular spot. I ordered my usual and waited for the buzz to kick in. Vanessa had said she would be by later, but no one knows when later comes.

27. Mushrooms.

After smoking a pipe full or two, I took a walk into the desert. I heard wild burros braying in the distance, as I came upon the sacred mound, I listened to my heart and spoke these words to my spirit guide, "I've reached the wall."

"There is no wall."

I knew that of course, the wall was not real. The wall did not exist. It stood about ten feet high.

"You can not climb, what is not there," the guide advised.

I conjured up a ladder and leaned it against the non-existent wall. As I stepped upon the the first rung, the wall began to move. The wall was moving upward, the ladder and I moved right along with the rising wall. The earth below soon fell away from view. There was no wall, now I knew there

98

was no earth as well. The ladder, the wall and I all disappeared. The spirit guide was silent, no advice to give on that which does not exist. Now I see a door. Is the door real?

Eskimo Summer

Indian Summer is warm weather that occurs during the early Autumn. Eskimo Summer is warm weather that happens during the late Autumn, sometimes even the early Winter.

The Diver

The mask was so fogged, he could not see the shark coming. The shark's view was in no way obscured. It hit its target with typical explosive suddenness. The area was flooded with a red cloud of blood that spread then thinned. He never had time for last thoughts. His friend, some thirty yards away, watched as the horror of torn limbs unfolded before her eyes. She released shark repellent. The fogged mask with cracked lens floated slowly to the ocean floor.

The Friend

As she sat across me, still in a state of shock, she told her tale of her friend's dance with death. Her eyes were bloodshot, with crusts of tears still clinging to her face. The soft spoken voice belied the emotion that ran below the surface. Her Intuit heritage stood her well.

With sorrow welling deep, her basic stoic character was gradually taking over.

"You know, we weren't sleeping together."

Of course, we all assumed they were.

"It doesn't matter now.", I said. But it did. We had grown up together. Childhood friends. My first love. She had gone away to college. I stayed home. She had returned to work on her master's thesis.

"No, I guess it doesn't. I'm not really sure what does matter now."

I didn't want to say it. Didn't want to say you have to go on with your work, finish your thesis. I didn't want to have to say goodbye to her again. I wanted to tell her I still loved her.

100

The Mask

The mask washed up on the shore today. The cracked lens was gone. I slipped it on and dove into the frigid water. I heard my mother calling, "You'll catch your death!". I wondered what I would do with death, if I did catch it. The water was clear. No fog. No sharks. I stayed clear of the spot where the attack took place. I came up for air and saw a humpback blowing spray off the point. I went back to shore and flung the mask back into the sea. I knew the mask would drift back to shore with the tide. Again and again.

The Dream

I knew death, but it didn't know me. I was twenty-two. A man by some's standards. I didn't see the appeal. The diver's death touched me in place that made me return to the shore, to the mask. It had become a ritual. I was searching for the shark. Not to kill. To ask, what did death taste like? In my dreams, the shark told me death tastes like the first day of Eskimo Summer. A little cool at first, then it burns, the fire races down the throat, explodes in your stomach, makes your mind reel, makes you laugh and cry at the same time, makes you want to shout and whisper. It makes you crazy the shark said.

I buried the mask in the frozen sand. Eskimo Summer is gone.

I spend a lot of time in front of the fire. I am not cold, in fact I am burning up. I refuse to ice fish. My mother tells me I must leave when the spring comes. Right now it feels like the winter will never end. Going away may make a man of me yet.

The Spring

I am camped on the border. In last night's dream I said goodbye to the shark. I have lost death and now I feel like a man. The diver's friend is living in Coos Bay, Oregon. I will go there and tell her that losing death is like gaining a new life. Maybe, we can be friends or something. When I see her, I hope I don't see his face in her eyes. Perhaps I will see mine or something.

101

Debtor's Prison

Now there is bankruptcy. If that doesn't work out you become homeless and live in a cardboard box. It sounds funny but really isn't.

Which reminds me, once when I was on the road, I was waiting for a cashier's check to clear, (from a car I stole, I mean sold) I was without funds. I spent a couple of nights in a department store. Now that is homeless living. I hid under a bed in Home Furnishings, then when the store closed I raided the Snack Bar. After the check cleared I stayed in a nearby Holiday Inn, not nearly as thrilling.

but the story really began earlier...

After the Bus

It started with the Draft. I was nineteen. There was a bus ride to Midway. A jumbo jet to Ft. Lewis, Washington for basic training. Rain, rocks and evergreens were everywhere. My isolation was intensified, the new landscaped changed everything. I was in the world.

It was 1970, I was now in Ft. Hood, Texas. I was part of an armored division. "Old Blood & Guts" unit, "Hell on Wheels". If I had met George S. Patton back in WWII, it might have been me getting slapped. Patton was the soldier's soldier. I was anti-war. The anti-soldier.

Guys were still being sent to Viet Nam. I was being trained to fight. I didn't want to go. I didn't have a good attitude. Under different circumstances the training might have been fun. Plenty of the others were enjoying "playing" war. We got to shoot guns, fire cannons. The rain, cold and mud was bad. The noise was worse. The thought of people being at the end of cannon shots was more than I could bare. Shooting a M-16 at targets was easy. To blow someone's flesh away was beyond my imagination.

I went A.W.O.L.

I was running. I was scared. I wanted it all to go away. I took a small commuter plane to Dallas. I had a bank account back home with a couple

102

thousand dollars. I flew to Chicago to withdraw the cash. Next, I flew to Providence, Rhode Island. Obviously, I was not thinking clearly. The only reason for going there, was to seek some kind of shelter. I was hoping to find some kind of "providence". It wasn't there.

Key West, Florida. That was the place to be. At least its mild weather made sense.

Thelma and Clyde

Like Bonnie Parker said, "we rob banks", Thelma loved Clyde the way Bonnie Parker loved Clyde Barrow, Clyde was willing to go along.

Clyde was minding his own business, not a thought in the world of robbing banks. Thelma was obsessing. She wanted out of the small dusty town she was born into. She wanted to get away from the small-minded parents, that couldn't and wouldn't understand her. She wanted to be rich. She wanted to buy, or steal, all the things she didn't have.

Clyde was driving through Thelma's small dusty town one day, his car broke down. While his car was being fixed, Clyde wandered into the dingy little restaurant where Thelma worked and wanted desperately to leave.

When Thelma saw Clyde walk in, it wasn't exactly love at first sight, it was more like, here's a man who will do whatever I want him to do. She wanted out and Clyde was going to be her ticket. Love would come later. Love not based on what she wanted, (she wanted everything), but what she needed.

When Clyde saw Thelma, it was love at first sight. It started with the smile she gave him, then when she spoke, it was the way her voice made him feel warm. Oh sure, he knew right away she was trouble, really what woman isn't. Trouble didn't really bother him, he would take it in stride, like most of life. He would roll with the punches, sidestep the gouges, evade the falling rocks, duck from the slings and arrows of misfortune. He was a survivor.

Somehow he would survive Thelma.

Not likely.

"What would you like?"

This is not how he answered. I would like to take your lips and make them mine. I would like to stroke your thighs and feel them tremble with desire. I would like to fall into your eyes and melt into your soul. I would like to breath your air and become a part of you, the part no one else sees. I would like to tell you all my hopes and dreams, then watch as we see them all come true. I would like to hear you say, "Clyde take me away from all of this." At least that part would come true.

104

Yes. Clyde was a poet at heart.

"A cup of coffee and a piece of pecan pie."

"Would you like the pie warmed up a bit?"

Oh would he ever.

"Do you know what Willie Sutton said, when he was asked, why do you rob banks?"

"That's where they keep the money. Do you know what Nicolas Cage said in Matchstick Men, when asked, does crime pay?"

"No. What?"

"Yes, but not very well."

Thelma and Clyde had left the restaurant together. They walked around the small town streets, talking as they strolled.

They shared their stories and their dreams. Clyde had no real interest in crime, having tried it once or twice. He had decided that it was not really all that exciting and the chance of being caught was not worth the risk. He liked his freedom and was quite claustrophobic. Thelma, on the other hand, had spent the last five years convincing herself that she was in a desperate situation and of course the way out called for drastic measures. She had spent many hours planning and plotting, the perfect bank heist. After all, it was where the money was.

"I can see," said Clyde, " that you have thought about this a lot."

"Almost nothing else. Sometimes it seems it would be too easy. Why doesn't everyone do it? "

"A million things could go wrong. The best laid plans of mice and men and Thelma Louise Bramble often go awry.

What is so great about being rich and able to buy anything you want?"

Thelma looked at Clyde like he was from Mars. Jesus, this guy has no

ambition whatsoever. I know I can wrap him around my finger, twice if necessary. But is that enough? I know I can be the brains. Can he be the brawn?

"The great thing about being rich, is that you are not poor. Being poor sucks. It sucks big time. I have been poor my whole life. I can not, will not be poor for the rest of my life. I have to get out of this place, if it is the last thing I ever do. If a bank job goes wrong, then it goes wrong, at least I tried. I have to try. And you have to help me."

"Okay."

105

Remember, Clyde fell in love at first sight. Love can make people do strange things. Whatever Thelma wanted, she could have. Clyde was a poet at heart, but he wasn't very smart, very brave or very strong. And to tell the truth Thelma wasn't nearly as smart as she thought she was. This had doom written all over it. Yep. Clyde was going to end up in the "Big House" and Thelma was going to get off scott free. But there is a bright side. Thelma would fall in love with Clyde, not because he gave her what she wanted, but because he gave her what she needed. Someone who was loyal and true, someone who would do anything for her. Even try to make her dreams come true, no matter what the cost. Freedom is just another word for nothing left to give. He gave his all for her. She took it in and made a real life, without thoughts of crime. She would wait for him. She would bear his child. And unlike Bonnie & Clyde, they would grow old together.

106
Mullung

The earth's oldest creature crawled upon the shore. It had been a thousand years since she had breathed air, her blow hole felt the atrophy, she struggled to draw in the thick musky soup. Below the surface of the sea, laid a fresh new batch of eggs. It was still too soon to return to her first love. Dry land. As she lingered on the bank, her gills contracted, instinctively searching for the water she had become accustomed to.

The mullung would need to return to the sea soon, but she could not resist testing out her legs, she began to move, at first it was just a crawl, her breath was really labored now. As she pushed against the increased gravity, she became light-headed, there was danger of blacking out. I am being foolish and sentimental, she thought to herself, why risk death just to take a few steps. She lifted her body up. The first shaky step was followed by another and another. She was walking again. She lifted her head and turned skyward.

Stars. My beautiful lucky stars, twinkling, shining, blinking on and off it seemed. They are saying hello, she thought. That brought laughter. The noise startled her, she had forgotten how different sound carried in air as opposed to water.

It was time to return. Intense pain had begun. She was ready to return to dry land, but it was not ready for her. Besides, her babies would soon hatch, they would need her there, to hear her stories, the promise of a bright new strange world.

107
crumbs

My license to steal has expired.
The key to longevity is procrastination.
Curiosity killed the cat, for awhile I was a suspect.
There are no absolutes, including this one.
Everything is arbitrary and contrived.
If wishes were rain, we'd all be flooded.

