

Waters Under The Bridge

By
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Valley Road Books

Waters Under the Bridge

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Dedicated to those who cross life's river.

Carl Adams

"We shall always remember"

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Introduction To "Waters Under The Bridge"

When we came to the first raging river we knew we must somehow cross over to the other side. After studying the problem we built our first bridge and the rest is history. We have been building them ever since.

Still underneath these great spans runs the raging river and gallons of water are carried out to sea with the debris and scuttle therein accumulated. The bridge from life and beyond crosses the raging river of destiny and the flotsam of accumulated experience is carried with it. However this bridge was not built by man but by the divine hand of God. Thus as we shall stand someday on that bridge we will see the life of humanity pass beneath us. In this book of poetry you will find a variety of poems and many of them will deal with the bridges we build and that divine bridge that awaits.

To Those Who Dream

To those who dream and never wake afraid,
Might I give the pause,
The mountainscapes of where I've dreamed,
Dare say may give the cause.

Lost in thoughts of rancor's dreary quest,
And there I played the host,
The haunts of which have made me weep,
O'er yesterday's pale ghost.

Dark clouds that hide the silver edge,
From eyes that search the sky,
These dreams are more than nightly fare,
For those who would but try.

To those who dream and never shed a tear,
In envy I have watched you sleep,
You are not tossed upon your billowed bed,
Whilst carried off into the deep.

Here I alone must watch the stars above,
Whilst fending off these dreams,
The black of night has come too close,
To risk its silver streams.

Upon a distant shore I stand

Upon a distant shore I stand,
And turn abruptly at the sound,
As angels join in chorus grand,
For I who was lost but now am found.

Then where would lesser beings dwell,
If gentle souls might meet me there,
No demons ever rise up from hell,
Nor from the waters drink or dare.

There wafting on celestial wings,
These glorious minions at my side,
Softly comes a voice that rings,
As I within this host abide.

This distant plain has grasped my feet,
I'm held completed from earth's clay,
As friends have come the soul to greet,
And I have set my heart to stay.

Petrified Forest

They stand as trees unmoved
Cold as stone in icy wind
Their leaves have long since gone
The branches do not bend.

Many eons past they breathed
Still as granite now they stand
Lost to us the green crown
No longer leaves upon the land.

Drained of life not unlike a soul
Lost in self denial
The core is hard and very cold
Past the time of trial.

The ancient crumbled to the earth
Fragments in the ageless dust
Too far from life to recover
forgetting how to trust.

Up The Down Road

Placing each weary foot in time,
Casting my eyes to and fro,
Lost in thought of yesterday,
Up the down road I go.

No familiar face I see,
Only waving grass and dust,
Bound for glory or the grave,
Travel up the down road I must.

Down is up to some they say,
And time is quick in passing slow,
Some soon leave and others stay,
And up the down road I must go.

Today I'm young and tomorrow old,
Before me rise the steps I've strode,
The wind is chill and I grow cold,
As up is down the narrow road.

Upon my back I'm staring up,
I see the final winking star,
Up the down road one last time,
Farewell, It does not seem so far.

Words In A Mason Jar

I spoke into a mason jar,
Then put the lid on tight,
I placed it on the window sill
To catch the morning light.

The sunlight caught my whispers,
Then spun them into gold,
None could see the words I spoke,
They were the jars to hold.

Forever they would stay inside,
Dancing in the captive light,
Each syllable suspended there,
Golden, shimmering bright.

Inside that mason jar they are,
Eternally there to remain,
Where I may forget what I have said,
All lost and none to gain.

Perhaps someday I'll open it,
Then let my words escape,
And float upon the evening air,
Then watch what they will shape.

Travelers

Whither goes the stranger
the silent passerby,
What destination has he sought,
Beneath the glowering sky.

Shall not the nightly traveler
Invoke the questing soul,
When from the shadows does emerge
The faceless on his stroll.

So is the life that passes by
as on the the road we plod,
From time to time we glimpse the days
Ere they slip beneath the sod.

Hereto we are the traveler
as watched by a questing mind,
We journey toward our destiny,
Through life as though we're blind.

Where after long and steady steps
the stranger turns to see,
What eyes are cast upon his rout,
And all he sees is me.

Prisons In The Minor Key

Every song that I compose,
Is still written in the minor key,
The only thing that I can say,
It be locked somewhere inside of me.

They seem to sound the very same,
The words roll out across my tongue,
Repeating chords within my heart,
As if there were no others to be sung.

Hands pounding upon the ivory,
I regret the pain that I'm relating,
Even when the tears are free,
It all flows forth unhesitating.

So here within my prison cell,
I wait upon this unseen inspiration,
Hope for hope I might escape,
Break the bars that are my habitation.

Today tomorrow or the next,
I rise to see what waits on my horizon,
The storms may come to wash my face,
To let me know I have finally won.

Til then I'll sing my selfsame song,
Echoing for me a solemn destiny,
Pity you may only hear me play,
Of lonely prisons in a minor key.

Broken Crayons

My life is a box of broken crayons,
No mystery to me at all,
I've done the best with what I have,
Let the chips lie where they fall.

Sometimes the colors are obscure,
They all seem to look black,
I take a chance and pick a stub,
Make no excuse for what I lack.

So often what I draw is dark,
Like a rotten fallen leaf,
By chance I choose a crayon red,
Very much to my relief.

Bewildered by these broken pieces,
I still must work my art,
To draw a story that will be read,
And perhaps my life impart.

The House

Lives behind the walls still,
The ancient yesterdays,
Dramas of love and hate,
The struggles and vict'rys a haze.

All of it in sepia tones,
Stale and stagnant air,
Echoes of whispers almost heard,
The walls that seem to stare.

The empty house a falling marker,
Disheveled by the passing time,
Emptied of souls and laughter,
This house is now a tragic mime.

Still I hold it in my mind,
The final act in sorrow,
Held at distance for men to wonder,
And from its dust to borrow.

Tiger, Tiger in the Grass

His heart beats in the tall grass,
Vigilant, panting for his prey,
It approaches the death unaware,
The jungle law fulfilled this day.

The village elders call the hunter,
His gun is strapped upon his back,
They find the garment stained with blood,
Then settle on the felines track.

In the tall grass the watcher sees,
The taste of blood still on his tongue,
Driven from his natural home,
The man killer stalks beneath the sun.

Tiger, tiger in the grass,
The fervent beaters call,
The hunter's gun sets forth a crack,
The beast that stalks will surely fall.

Much like a ghost he slips away,
Silent in the sweltering night,
The taste of man child ever fresh,
To hunt again and fill with fright.

Tiger, tiger in the grass,
The hunter and the hunted wait,
They will not stop until its done,
One for love and one for hate.

The Diarist

He behind the dirty glass,
The darkness all about him,
Sits beside his cluttered desk,
Jaw set and countenance grim.

Measures words for words,
Squinting through thick glasses,
Mutters softly of the mundane,
Never noticing the life that passes.

His numbers roll across the pages,
The ink blotting with a smudge,
The tea now cold within his cup,
He keeps his unrelenting grudge.

The dingy hair has turned to white,
Long fingers with twisted bone,
But most of all his lonesome heart,
Has long since turned to stone.

He would write of love I'm sure,
Alas he can't recall its touch,
He only knows the empty ache,
Tis all and that is not much.

The pen will not yield its fruit,
Nor give the soul its rest,
The staring eyes will flutter close,
Bequeath his last request.

Passing Away

I don't know where I'm going,
But I'm going soon,
Beyond this worlds sorrow,
Past the stars and the moon.

With one last sigh of relief
And a tear in my eye,
This clay house will drop
And away I will fly.

Fare the well all my friends,
I kiss you goodbye,
Time has run down for me,
So please do not cry.

I'm passing like a vapor
Or a leaf in the wind,
I will exit this stage
As this drama must end.

I don't know where I'm going,
I've never been there before,
They say I have loved ones
And they await on that shore.

The roaring has now ended,
Blessed quietness in my soul,
I'm just drifting away,
Giving it up and yielding control.

The Hunter

Whisper my name on the wind
I will return to you again
So echoes the savage hunter
High overlooking the plain.

Today I go a hunting
The wild boar and the white deer
I taste the blood and know
Their song is on the wind I hear
As on the hunt I go.

My name is in the treetops
Below the boughs I'm known
My feet are silent on the path,
Of all creatures I am alone,
And I slay without wrath.

Whisper my name on the wind
I will return to you again
So echoes the savage hunter
High overlooking the plain.

Eugenics

If on the road of human progress
Some should stumble
Would not the strong lift up the weak
Or would they say to travel on and not
The rhythm of the marching cadence break

At all cost the goal of man's perfection
Must first and foremost be deployed
These are the superior thinkers
And surely must never be annoyed

Nay they reason, these weak and slowful dolts
In our glorious race cannot compete
Then we must march over them
And let them perish beneath our feet

Still some who claim a nobler calling
Stoop down to aid the poor and ill
Binding wounds and mopping foolish tears
They rise above the shouting jack boots
And silently squelch their unfounded fears

There lies a very dreadful evil in the earth
A cowering self righteous menace
The fascist call it racial cleansing
While the white coats of pseudoscience
Boldly call it eugenics.

Anthropologists

Gathering remnants of our fathers
fragments pieces and bones
Washing away the dust with tears
Beneath this indiscreet pile of stones.

Clay pots and broken shards
These few articles recall the man
Beads with a many feathered crown
Telling the story over again.

What catalog shall I remark in
The anthropologists dissertations
To the history of our fathers
His sacred scrolls and celebrations.

The long paperboard box upon the shelf
With remains of men we did not know
Studies in the ways all but forgotten
Oddly enough the way all must go.

Atheist

The pattern was in the heavens
Its purpose covered the earth
Blindly he faced the evidence
Arguing the facts of his birth.

The law had been delivered
Recorded in the distant stars
Still refusing the testimony
He would rather bear the scars.

"I am the unbeliever he cried"
What couldn't be seen did not exist
The world is nothing more than dust
So says the atheist.

The hand of God still covers him
It does not mock,
When evidence proclaims the truth
He steels himself like a rock.

Water of Life

Empty jars of earth and clay
Until they are filled again
The water of life exceptionally sweet
Overflows in the hearts of men.

Drink deeply then if you should thirst
The life and the soul is yours
Taste, you will see the strength of it
As into your soul it pours.

The fellowship of all mankind
Is life to the broken lonely soul
Pure as a stream in the desert
Drink and you shall be whole.

Gathering Moss

Gathering moss all lush and green,
In shady bowers where few have ever been,
There cool, content at rest to finally stand,
In the verdant greens of our homeland.

We spend our years on this troubled earth
And work the beloved soil of our native birth,
We toil through this life and do our best
Then beneath the green moss are laid to rest.

Then solemnly proceed the days of blissful yore,
When time for men shall end and be no more,
And under the canopy of whispering trees,
Is the green verdant moss and the fallen leaves.

Look not on those who have quietly departed,
Our testimony of gracious passing now is started,
When in the ages yet to come you shall cross,
The paths of those residing 'neath the gathering moss.

Wicker Man

The eyes behind the leaves
A face obscured by pain
Long after suns have set
And clouds have brought the rain.

The ritual of perfect grace
Where standing in the trees
The man who never was
Is caressed by autumn breeze.

His face reflects confusion
As he wipes away the tears
Too late he realizes his own destiny
And the culmination of his fears.

Holding to the sound of thunder
Submitting to the plan
The dance upon the meadows
Announcing the wicker man.

Notations

The notebook and the knapsack
Have traveled down life's road
The compass and pup tent
Complete the travelers load.

The fingers stained with ink
with spectacles in hand
Gathering the flora and the fauna
These samples from the land.

With eyes and mind in sync
Pondering the rivers flow
The mountains as the backdrop
Covered over now with snow.

So he writes of natures ways
All that creeps and runs or flies
Noted in the tattered book
Of life and death and lies.

Longitude, latitude and degrees
At first glance a world wild
In ages how gradually he sees
A world by men so sadly defiled.

Transient Man

Where ever the wind blows I am.
Where ever the tree grows I am.
Whenever the bobcat prowls I am.
Whenever the wolf howls I am.
Whoever the river says I am.
Whoever the mountain says I am.
I am the transient man.
Where ever the rain falls I am.
Where ever the loon calls I am.
Where the ocean meets the shore I am.
Where none have ever gone before I am.
Where the rivers flow beyond I am.
Where ever you find a quiet pond I am.
I am the transient man.

Epitaph In The Dust

Tracing fingers in the dust
a writing page for the vagabond
Winds that blow the same erase
So none shall ever respond.

Gone away are the hobo rovers
The boxcars are sadly empty now
Tattered coats blow in the wind
of home and hearth they knew not how.

Yesterdays and lonesome nights
Railroad riders around a fire
Tin cups to warm calloused hands,
as the smoke clouds expire.

Songs are all that remain
The music of the homeless men
Slowly vanished with the train
Never to return again.

Insignificant

If the stars should fall tomorrow
Like rain on a dry earth
Would you still kiss these mortal lips
Though parched and dry from birth?

Remember me and I shall not perish
But catch the stars for you to kiss,
Draw you close and breathe you in
I the soul you always seem to miss.

Linger near my memory awhile
Tarry by the watchfires of my soul
Let your fingers trace my name
Remembering keeps me whole.

However Limited

This and that clutters the way,
And still we blunder on,
Day after day we search the sky,
Until all hope is gone.

We count the landmarks,
Forever in the hope of joy.
However limited our resource,
Every effort we employ.

When the path is clear we run,
Like greyhounds in the race,
Its all we know in life,
Our destiny and our place.

Halfway To the Moon

Roads of life are full of shallow impressions,
Where uncertain feet have trod,
The aged must walk on and the young do,
But dreamers leave this earthly sod.

They go where I have gone and farther,
Halfway to the moon and back,
Where silver shines like fallen coins,
And stars are shining in the velvet black.

Step lightly and your soul will surely soar,
Above, beyond, to the stuff of dreams,
Where all who gaze into the luminous orb,
Are propelled into the greater schemes.

Most however walk the dull and dreary roads,
Shallow footprints never veering off the track,
Waiting with the crest fallen to succumb,
Never going halfway to the moon and back.

Longing For A Place

In historical fashion the human yearns,
As he has yearned for a season,
The life not yet attaining the place,
Giving the passing of years a reason.

Not the rhetoric of some fantasy,
But a real purpose and a place,
Belonging to some grand occasion,
Where we might find grace.

We search life and if fortunate acquire,
That certain destiny that brings worth,
In this valuable position we flourish,
And pass our life upon this earth.

For some it is that simple act of birth,
When family enfolds the growing child,
Nurtured by love and kind guidance,
The man, the woman grow serene and mild.

Finding a place that has meaning and purpose,
The humankind steps upon the path,
Down life they travel until the inevitable end,
Given over to acts of nobility and free of wrath.

Letters From a Prison Cell

Condemned to die for what I've done,
Condemned to die at set of sun.
Then lay me down in shallow graves,
And cover me with faded leaves.

What makes a man to write it down,
The words of truth to draw a frown,
A story of his crime to tell,
In letters from his prison cell.

I hear the sound of hammers falling,
Of the gallows builders voices calling,
There's so much time that I have wasted,
And too much of life I've never tasted.

The frost is on the window pane,
As mourners proceed along the lane,
The Pastor with his cloak and sash,
And grievors in sack cloth and ash.

O' mother dear I see your tears,
Such woe I've brought you all these years,
O' father who could know your shame,
And I alone am who's to blame.

Its cold today and colder still,
When death shall come to bring its chill,
And I beneath the prison yard,
Will find the price is very hard.

Giants of The Sierra

There be those trees that stand so tall,
Like they should touch the sky,
Green are their outstretched boughs,
And here below am I.

A sapling beneath these giants,
Their silent passing into the ages,
In awe this mortal takes in such grace,
As the rudiments of nature rages.

Whispers under heavens are heard,
Where leaves shall clap in summers gale,
And men shall sleep undisturbed,
As upward they prevail.

The redwoods and the great white firs
They dwarf this world of man,
And live beyond the years of men,
Because they simply can.

I join that caravan of mortal men,
Beneath great green boughs,
Long after I am forgotten,
My promises and vows.

Life is more than flesh and blood,
It thrives in trees as well as men,
The seeds go on to ages darkly,
In groves of kith and kin.

Behold these Giants reaching to the sky,
Tall and mighty sentinals of time,
Gods gift to all who walk the earth,
They are not yours nor mine.

Lovelorn In The City

Lost in the city I wandered the night,
The tears filled my eyes as I saw the blight,
The homeless were many tis certainly true,
But all I could think of was memories of you.

I pulled my coat tightly to hold out the cold,
Passing the corners where people were sold,
Yet nothing could cut me and leave me to bleed,
As the thought of your love I so desperately need.

Through alleys and sidestreets I stumbled along,
Yet there was no place that I seemed to belong,
And needless to say I was totally lost,
My eyes were just staring, my heart turned to frost.

Around me were others broken by love,
In doorways and windows or apartments above,
The city was full of the lovelorn tonight,
I passed them uncaring aware twas not right.

I'll have me some coffe and sit for a spell,
Then find some kind stranger my story to tell,
And when the dawn breaks a new day begins,
I'll start over wondering if I'll find love again

Lonely People

Somewhere in suburbia it happens everyday,
Someone crying in their coffee
With nothing left to say,
Lonely in their houses, talking to the walls,
Or just sitting counting faces in busy shopping malls.

Common lonely people, living empty days,
Silent in frustration by the way that life betrays,
Looking for a reason to take another breath,
The long way that leads them on to death.

Somewhere in a motel room sitting all alone,
Waiting for a strangers call on the telephone,
Neon lights are flashing through the window pane,
Aching just to hear somebody call your name.

In a railroad depot waiting for train,
Reading dated magazines, watching the falling rain,
Strangers standing side by side, without a single word,
Clicking endless tracks, the only sound thats heard.

Upon the steps of city hall or the stock exchange,
Finding lonely people is not all that strange,
One by one they file a long the busy city street,
Afraid to open up their hearts and so they never speak.

No Return

No return, no return,
When death has closed the gate,
No return, no return,
The rescuers are too late.

The pale and troubled face of youth,
Has chosen to give in,
In slack jawed surrender,
There is no escape but death to win.

No return, no return,
When death has closed the gate,
No return, no return,
The recuers are too late.

When death has failed this life,
And hands have folded close,
The lonely soul has left the house,
How sad the path you chose.

No return, no return,
When eyes have closed in death,
No return, no return,
When you breathed your final breath.

A mother wails, a father weeps,
Those close to you are torn,
The shell you left is all they have,
Upon this sorrowful morn.

No return, no return,
When death has closed the gate,
No return, no return,
This is your final fate.

The grave is all that's left for you,
Perhaps you found the light,
But such darkness overtook your soul,
I fear there's only night.

The Lonesome Tree

Down in the valley where the red fern grows,
Is a lonesome tree where the river flows,
Folks go there to read the names they see,
Then carve their own in the lonesome tree.

So when my life's nigh spent and my soul free,
I will carve my name in the lonesome tree,
Just a name in the bark when I have passed,
Life's too short only memorie's last.

When you try to read the twisted bark,
The letters remain though sap stains dark,
The story they tell is vague indeed,
Where the river flows and the soul is freed.

So I'll carve my name in the lonesome tree,
Then pray to God you'll remember me,
There is a seed that the wind has blown,
You will know my name when I'm gone.

By the river's bank 'neath the lonesome tree,
That's the place you will bury me,
Then carve your name in that self same day,
Long after I'm dust and have washed away.

O' lonesome tree where the song wind blows,
There are names in the trunk where memory flows,
A poor mans marker or a history book,
Tells a story to those who'll take time to look.

The Sound of Wings

I heard the sound of beating wings,
Filling the morning air,
My passage had disturbed their rest,
When I chanced upon them there.

They broke the silence with noise,
And made me suddenly aware,
Around my world was filled with wonder,
I had never thought to share.

I caught my breath and shuddered,
As in concert they took flight,
As bodies filled the morning sky,
Nearly blotting out the light.

Had I lingered ever long at home,
I would have missed the sight,
As from the trees a rapture broke,
The sound of wings in flight.

And for the moment I was one,
My heart was charged and free,
With thunderous explosion,
They seemed to carry me.

As suddenly I came to earth,
And tears were in my eyes,
I watched the flock vanishing,
Across the morning skies.

Triumph

Little steps are taken lightly,
When weary feet would fail,
The sky as dark as fears denial,
Yet day by day we shall prevail.

Once upon a time we faltered,
Yet never gave up the fight,
Though some grew tired of controversy,
We still stood strong for right.

Over mountains, through the vales,
Trod the sore and burdened soul,
Still encouraged by the by,
Triumph brings them self control.

At last the moment comes to light.
When victory arrives to stay,
Delight the weary soar like eagles,
This is the long awaited day.

Voyager of Hope

Launch out into the deep
O' ye sailors on the sea of life,
Hoist the sails and trim the main,
Then cut the waves like a knife.

Sail on I say O' ship of hope
Your days are yet but dreams,
The fresh salt air your billows fill,
Then catch the current and the streams.

The far shore awaits the bold
Where all the golden suns may set,
Yonder in that final night to come,
When your last adventure has been met.

O' ride the rolling wake and swell
Taste the headiness of freedom's call,
Know every coast and balmy isle,
Upon the deck of a ship that's tall.

Then when your sea legs begin to swoon
As on that deck ye lash your body spent,
Cast the dimming mortal eyes away,
Then all will wonder where you went.

O' sail o'er the horizen man of the sea
To that beyond where all is calm and still,
Sail on I say O' voyager of hope,
All your hopes and reams fulfill.

Soft Rain And Roses

Soft rain wears gently
and roses have thorns,
Their fragrance is subtle,
like the dew of the morns.

All flesh becomes bruised
When thorns pierce the soul,
Soft rains wears gently,
And the flesh is made whole.

So stand in the rain,
When the soul has been spent,
Or the heart has been broken,
by sorrow's advent.

Soon the flesh comes alive
with a torrent of pain,
And bravely you venture
to seize it again.

Soft rain wears gently,
And roses have thorns,
The fragrance is subtle.
the wounded heart warns.

Still we will partake,
To do less is forlorn,
Impaled on the beauty,
of a roses sharp thorn.

My Bridge

I could not span the raging sea,
Nor pass over to the distant shore!
For without an inner strength I'd fail,
And never find that open door!

My bridge to cross the troubled waters,
The strength of steel to gird me to the end,
Whatever passes beneath my weary traverse,
I find my help in my dearest friend!

My bridge is made of flesh and bone,
Of promises faith and dreams,
And though the sea may roll and toss,
That distant shore still gleams.

I may not walk upon the rolling waves,
To reach lifes other side,
But there are those who bear me up,
Like a bridge thats vast and wide.

The Price of Peace

Onward trekked the son of Adam,
Over so long a tedious trail,
That in hopes to find the answer,
Men at last should yet prevail.

Night and day his will determined,
Life or death might be his fate,
Still the task lay full before him,
His only prayer he not be late.

Behind the home of friends and family,
The rubble of a torn land,
Should he fail then these would suffer,
The mountains still lay close at hand.

How sadly did this all befall him,
What treachery that fate had dealt,
The world he knew began to crumble,
In fear his purpose began to melt.

Tears ran down his face undaunted,
As his weary feet continued on,
The mountain reared up hard before him,
Still he would breach it come the dawn.

His slender hope began to rally,
The fire upon the mountain glowed,
His elders spoke of peace descending,
And how on men t' would be bestowed.

So Adam's son stood full in glory,
With wings enfolding his battered form,
The journey now was near completed,
Bravely he now withstood the storm.

From the fire he drew the object,
That for so long twas man's desire,
There in his hand elusive peace,
Standing fast in the cleansing fire.

Peace at last embraced the people,
Yet not without the cost of life,
The son of man lay still and silent,
His sacrifice had ended strife.

May we remember those who suffer,
Who bring the precious peace to men.
Lifted from this world onto another,
They will not walk this way again.

A Wanderer's Creed

Above my head the starry sky,
Beneath my feet the grassy sod,
Within my soul the will to try,
And in my heart the light of God,

Before me rises the open road,
Behind are memories some unkind,
Upon my back a lighter load,
And a brighter day I hope to find.

The moon by night to travel by,
A sun by day to warm my heart,
The castle clouds up in the sky,
And dreams of journeys yet to start.

Unread Books

Books upon books high on the shelf,
Covered in ages of dust,
Never cracked open, never read,
Committed to others for trust.

Stories forgotten and fading each day,
Crumbling pages of velum and linen,
Too little time to be read they decay,
Legend and honor the history's of men.

Who will recall the novelists prose?
The ramblings of diarists, across the page,
A poet describing the scent of a rose,
The historians accounts of a golden age.

Millions of people we never shall meet,
Found in the pages of books now unread,
The names of kings and there defeat
Poets grown silent and authors long dead.

Books upon books up high on the shelf,
Time enough to read if we slow down a bit,
Settling down for the soul and the self,
Taking the moment to read and to sit.

The Part of Us To Stay

You are the beauty in the storm.
The hope of years to come,
Our delight and legacy of love,
That's where you come from.

Be not afraid of whats ahead,
Though the road seem very long,
You carry from our hearts,
To this weary world our song,

And like the dying leaf,
We shall pass on our way,
You are the gift we give this world,
The part of us to stay.

Think of us as guiding stars,
When we have left this plain,
Ever watching from the past,
You are whats left only you remain.

Words Of Love

These are the words of love
Woven in syllables silver gilt,
Softly spoken over ages of time,
Sealed with commitment love is built.

Not fallen into place like shards,
It is deliberate in its intent,
Cleverly conceived in the heart,
Not casual nor upon accident.

It is a building of noble merit,
Decent and kind like strength,
Timely in its occurrence always,
Achieved at last in length.

The purpose of its structure obvious,
Displayed on the open hearts,
Remaining the monument of human grace,
When at last loneliness departs.

These then are the words of love,
The building of our gentle lives,
Framing what shall be our shelter,
The habitation of husbands and wives.

When a Man Lay Dying

When a man lay dying ancient in his days,
With his loving wife kneeling as she prays,
He stares at the ceiling searching for his life,
And reaches for silver hairs of his good wife.

When a man lay dying vanquishing his fears,
Tired eyes blinking through his falling tears,
Not crying at his dying its his unfinished tasks,
Wondering can someone answer the question he asks.

When a man lay dying aching in his pain,
He wonders will folks remember his good name,
Will his children be touched by his life,
Then his trembling hand reaches to his wife.

When a man lay dying peacefully at last,
Closing his eyes leaving all else in the past,
His head cradled tenderly in his dear wifes lap,
Somewhere in the distance he hears the sound of taps.

When a man lay dying ancient in his days,
Every man listens to this call, everyman obeys,
He's not crying at his dying but what's left behind,
Somewhere in the distance somewhere in his mind.

Living On St. Paul Street

Living on St. Paul street isn't easy
In a little stuck up mid western town,
Where the derelicts and misfits all gather
And the houses are ramshackle and run down.

Down the street and just around the corner,
At the bar and grill juke box music fills the air,
The preacher in the store front thumps his bible,
While the people walking by don't seem to care.

As for me I live with grandpa and grandma;
I have since I was just a child of three.
Never knew my dad and my mom ,
I been okay 'cause they've been there for me.

People have me marked as just a loser,
Because I live on the wrong side of the town,
The railroad tracks can be a harsh divider,
But I refuse to let that old train run me down.

I'm just a poor boy living on St. Paul street,
But I just refuse to let it pull me down.
I'm loved and warmed by a very special family,
Who happen to live on the other side of town.

Someday I'll prove to everyone its different,
A house that's filled with love is what we need,
Life is not about the street that you live on,
If in your heart you're determined to succeed.

The Dance

Handsome she said as I walked away,
Maybe you got the time of day,
And so I stopped to hear her out,
A strange old bird I had no doubt.

When I was young and pretty too,
I could attract boys the likes of you,
But now I'm tired and well worn out,
I've smoked too much and got the gout.

What if you could just take a chance,
Offer an old girl just one slow dance,
I almost turned to walk away,
But something tugged my heart to stay.

Then as the music from the radio blared,
I took the time some how I cared.
We danced across the diner floor,
She danced as she had many years before.

I'm sure I saw the gathered years,
Melt away beneath her salty tears,
And when finished and the song was done,
She looked at me saying thank you son.

Then on my cheek she placed a kiss,
And I knew this was a dance I'd never miss,
The old girl turned and walked away
That was her dance, it was her day.

As The Crow Flies

Above the earth the wings are spread,
Cast on the cloudy skies,
To find the way to gray fair land,
The way that the lone crow flies.

The wind swept yard, an old barnyard,
And the lonesome wind that cries,
The fallow field and the broken plow,
Far below as the lone crow flies.

The well is dry and the barn turned gray,
A house forgotten tells no lies,
The shutters slap in the evening breeze,
Overhead the lone crow flies.

The wagon wheel and broken stockyard gate,
Remind me of a life of second tries,
Of failures and heartaches as well,
And overhead the crow still flies.

Then on the bones of a broken dream,
Somewhere in the sordid past,
The wind has brought this visitor,
For the crow has alit at last.

A Walk In The Wood

Whenever I take a walk in the wood,
At the close of a weary day,
I tarry as long as the sun has set,
Then reluctantly I cannot stay.

With the great boughs above me,
I stand neath the covering green,
Ferns and trilliums caressing my legs,
Tis a place most wonderfully serene.

If I should venture the wood at dawn,
Ere the world is waking from sleep,
Then I'll hold in awe the things that I see,
And those secrets faithfully keep.

For these should be shared alone with God,
Too precious they are to betray,
For words cannot speak of the volume,
Of what nature commands us obey.

So come stay and see for yourself,
Tis worth the walk in the wild,
Your soul will be blessed in God's peace,
And your heart by His nature beguiled.

Whenever I take a walk in the wood,
I discover the world unknown,
And with reverence its beauty embrace,
Then humbly I make it my own.

The Drifter

He came down from the mountains
and he had a silver tongue,
Whether his words were spoken
or whether they were sung.

He carried an old flat top guitar
His fingers danced across the strings,
He could of played for magistrates
potentates or kings.

With a heart filled with compassion
and the gospel in his soul,
Preaching Jesus and salvation
Seemed his only goal.

Proclaimed the end was coming
and he believed the words he said,
Men gave up to his persuasion
and he turned the women's heads.

His hands could work in the cotton fields
just as gently stroke a child's face,
He could stand down the biggest bully,
and then set him in his place.

He spoke about the end times coming
with a fire in his eyes,
Angels in the guise of common men
and eagles in the skies.

Some said he was just a drummer,
another a common lowlife grifter,
Others knew him as a friend to all,
just a hobo and a drifter.

He left his mark upon the land
from the north and to the south,
Giving hope to those who would believe
when he closed the skeptics mouth.

A shadow cross the lives of ordinary men
an indelible memory of the truth,
Fading away in the back of a flatbed truck,
a contradiction both noble and uncouth.

In every railroad yard he strides,
to catch that midnight train,
Guitar on his back and bible in his hand
overcoat billowing in the summer rain.

He came down from the mountains
and he had a silver tongue,
Whether his words were spoken
or whether they were sung.

I hear an old flat top guitar
as fingers danced across the strings,
He played the same for hobos,
potentates or kings.

If You've Known Love

Can you pluck the wings from butterflies,
And never shed a rueful tear?
Can you trample over lilies
o'er the grave of someone dear?

Can you laugh about a broken heart,
With the one you used to love?
Can you draw a bead with cupid's bow
At the pure white angel dove?

If you never have felt sorry
to the Lord above,
Then I swear to you my brother
You've never known love!

Then I swear to you my brother
You've never known love!

But if you have held a dear one close,
When life is ebbing low,
If you tossed a rose of sorrow on the grave,
And wept to see them go,

If you kissed the lips of passion's bride,
And it made your heart to leap,
If you held onto the vows of love through years,
As promises you must keep,

Held a baby close within your arms,
Been overcome with pride and joy,
And knew there was no force on earth,
That could your love destroy.

Then be assured you have been blessed,
By God who dwells above,
And I swear to you my brother
You've surely known love!

And I swear to you my brother
You've surely known love!

The Unmovable Obstacle of Self

Of all the things I would like to do,
I find that I fail the most,
When I stand in the middle of my intent,
Then proudly make my boast.

The reason seems to me obtuse,
When relying on self control,
With glorious intent I forge ahead,
But inevitably miss my goal.

The fact that I mean to do so well,
Has little to do with self,
The man that stands in the crossroad,
Is unaccustomed to stealth.

So on I trudge in life's pursuit,
Aware of my dubious wealth,
Then in obvious despair I surrender,
And retire my intent to the shelf.

Wherever you go as you travel in life,
Your intentions at success seem to melt,
Consider the thing that hinders us most,
The unmovable obstacle of self.

The Morning Train

There's a whistle blowing from a train
I hear it coming down the line,
I've got my ticket for a one way ride,
Gonna get on board I won't be left behind.

I'm leaving on the glory train come morning,
My bags are packed and I am set to go,
It won't be long I'll hear the engine roaring,
Then I'll hear that hallelujah whistle blow.

Tis long hard haul up old mount Zion,
But there'll be peace in the valley below.
Around the curve and through the darkest tunnel,
To a land where only milk and honey flow.

There'll be know waiting for late comers,
You must have your ticket ready on that day,
The engineer has told the fireman and conductor,
God's children gotta watch and pray.

I'm leaving on the glory train come morning,
My bags are packed and I am set to go,
It won't be long I'll hear the engine roaring,
Then I'll hear that hallelujah whistle blow.

Faithful Fathers, Faithful Mothers

Faithful thou abiding fathers,
Thou hast born thy burden gladly,
Through the sacred hours and ages,
Heavy hearted oft times sadly,

Faithful, faithful comes the saintly,
With the message they be bearing,
To this generation bringing,
Words of life to all are sharing.

Faithful thou our prayerful mothers,
Thy tearfulness through want and war,
Through evening watch and midnight,
Held the darkened tide near shore.

Faithful, faithful Godly parents,
Watchful ever o'er thy children,
When the wolf draws near the door,
Ever vigilant thy brood defend.

Faithfulness are these true believers,
Sure of foot and heart and soul,
To the lost a light now shining,
Stern at the helm whilst billows roll.

Faithful fathers, faithful mothers,
Thankful are thy tender offspring,
Through the night you didst not falter,
Raising our voices of thee we sing.

Simply Spoken

The slow tongue speaks of truth,
The liar slurs his word,
If any deem the orator a fool,
Then they have never heard.

From passages that we record,
Are lines upon each page,
If spoken from an honest heart,
They will not the heart enrage.

The idiot is cast aside of pride,
But never of his own,
If you will listen to his speech,
Instead of grieve and groan.

What's learned of him will yet amaze,
The scholar and the proud,
And mark the page of history,
With wisdom pure and loud!

Woe slow of speech and simple man,
May he yet rock this troubled globe,
Then wear the crown of nobility,
And the mighty yet disrobe.

Johnny Don't Run, Gotta Put Down Your Gun

Young Johnny came home when the war was done,
He laid down his gear and he laid down his gun,
Gonna start all over and pick up his life;
settle down with his child and his pretty young wife.

But things were different, they just weren't the same,
Life gets complicated and who you gonna blame?
Young Johnny tried hard, but nothing went right,
Found no solace for his soul staying out at night.

The boss man told Johnny when you come home again
Your job will be waiting here, just like it was then
But when times got hard, they let young Johnny go
and the plant moved down to old Mexico,

His young wife cried in the middle of the night,
Johnny you been drinking and you no it isn't right,
Your young son needs a daddy you know its true,
the nights are lonesome and I need you too.

Buddy came over and took Johnny's young wife.
Then in a struggle Buddy got stabbed with a knife,
Johnny got scared and he started to run,
Ran home home to his daddy's and got his bad gun.

The law came for Johnny, said listen here son,
You gotta stop where you are, put down your gun.
The sun was high in the afternoon sky,
And it was for certain somebody would die!

The report of a pistol spoke louder than words,
It broke the tension startled the birds,
In the middle of the road Johnny lay by his gun,
The last words he heard was Johnny don't run!

Young Johnny came home when the war was done,
He laid down his gear and he laid down his gun,
Gonna start all over and pick up his life;
settle down with his child and his pretty young wife.

The war is not over if its still in your head,
You need to lay down your pain or you'll wind up dead.
Life's too short to waste on a fight you can't win,
Johnny's waiting at heaven's gate trying to get in.

My Long Black Coat

Black coat falling round my shoulders,
Its just a shroud I wear,
See these lines upon my face,
See the silver in my hair.

I have walked the long, long road,
There's dust upon my feet,
My eyes are veiled with tears,
From the pain of folks I meet.

There is a black book in my hand,
Its pages are well worn,
I pull it from beneath my coat,
Read pages that are torn.

The wind whips at my long black coat,
I am standing in the night,
The words I read grip my soul,
There's illuminating light.

I pull my coat close about me,
And continue on my way,
A man in a long black coat alone,
Coming out of yesterday!

I am the man standing in the gap,
The black is for the lost,
A well worn Bible in my hand,
My eyes have read the cost.

Golden Words

Of all the golden words spilled forth,
That tongues of men contrive,
The words that tell the naked truth,
These surely must survive.

Though buried in an ancient tomb,
Or locked away inside a vault,
The words that ring the clearest,
Are those in which there is no fault.

Though men may die and lips grow still,
Their ink and blood may cease to flow,
Their words are heard beyond the grave,
The truth is ours to know.

Tis the greatest legacy a mortal can bequeath,
Written on a parchment for progeny to hold,
One statement conclusively to sum a mortal life,
A treasury most infinite and valued over gold.

So oft oppressed by tyrants hand,
A word that stirs an enslaved heart,
Will find the way to eyes and ears,
Though mighty oceans it must part!

“They closed my mouth to silence me,
But what I'd written down still stood,
And will carry on into the common stream,
Revealing the greater good”.

Once Again To Cross the Bridge

Tis uncanny the light on foggy bridges,
That plays within the mists,
And walking 'cross the span,
My face exposed in wonder, gently kiss'd.

On the other shore are houses,
And those as tall as castle towers,
They sing to me of yesterday,
With friends closed within their bowers.

So disappearing I must pass within,
Shadows coming here and going there,
Muffled sounds invade my ears,
Long ago at vespers' whispered prayer.

Upon the bridge returning I remember,
Tis enough the scent of fragrant mist,
The gentle voices from the gardens
And the memories of being kiss'd.

Slow Dawn

It comes in the cool crisp moments,
Gently at the edge of the night.
When I slip from the warm cocoon of my bed
And I find that very special place,
Where I can catch the birth of light.

Slowly the night sheds its dark garments,
And the blush of dawn spreads o'er the sky,
I hold my breath for an eternity it seems,
As the slow light rises and I let out a sigh.

It is the slow dawn, that time of peace,
A silence like the world seldom knows,
I have seen it but not nearly enough,
I have felt the breeze of dawn as it arose.

When it is almost light but not light,
A twilight between time, between man and nature,
When quietly the fingers of the night let loose
And I bid farewell to its slow departure.

Slow dawn comes alive and I am awestruck,
Just like a symphony in all its grandness,
Each instrument is directed by passions maestro,
Until the sky is painted in all its final brightness.

The Empty Cross

When I journey back to calvary,
At times with in my mind,
And struggle up that lonely hill,
That rugged cross to find.

I reminisce at what it cost my Lord,
At what He had to bear,
And I wonder how so many folks,
Don't even seem to care.

That lonesome hill is empty now,
There's no one on the cross,
With rusty nails still in the beam,
His arms were stretched across.

The crowds have long since wandered,
Yet their voices echo still,
Crucify him, crucify him,
Still brings to me a woeful chill.

Then I journey to the garden tomb,
I find it is empty too,
But a fragrance lingers in the air,
As if someone had passed through.

The grave clothes have been folded,
And the stone is rolled away,
The soldiers all have fled their post,
In fear they could not stay.

Leading up to that rugged cross
And borrowed empty tomb,
Twas the promise given to the world,
Safe within a virgin's womb.

I look back to see an empty stable,
a manger filled with hay,
Where shepherds came to see a child,
Now empty tis where he lay.

At a wedding feast in Cana,
Plain water became wine,
Later on with loaves and fishes,
Five thousand were made to dine.

Blinded eyes were opened,
And the lame were made to walk,
Lepers were cleansed of their disease
And the deaf and dumb could talk.

And there with simple fisherman,
He calmed the raging sea,
Walked upon the deepest waters,
Bidding Peter come to me.

Now the streets he walked are empty,
Near the sea of Galilee,
Hell's broken gates' been opened,
Death's captive's have been set free.

Now no one hangs upon the cross,
The tomb is empty too,
For Jesus has taken up residence,
Inside of me and you.

The vacant cross and empty tomb,
What glory does impart,
Giving hope to every wayward soul,
And every vacant heart.

Truth Is Not Always Obvious

Truth is not always obvious,
Oft hidden from the eyes,
It must be sought with diligence,
Collected by the wise.

The countenance of truth is somber,
Not harsh if taken as it comes,
Its music is from a distance,
Accompanied by the sound of drums.

When truth is found it grows in value,
A treasure to those who hold it dear,
Laid bare for patrons of its worth,
And from it they have naught to fear.

Truth is often plain and simple,
Lacking self indulgent grace,
When found it wears humility,
Projecting shame upon each face.

The glow of truth is everlasting,
It lights a thousand hidden wrongs,
Reveals the tragedy of lying,
And writes the sweetest of all songs.

An Orpheus Sings

They spoke of you in a slow tongue,
Thick with the olden language,
Weaving the tale of the traveler,
He who stands at thresholds pondering,
These mortal diatribes in silken robes,
His lyre ever poised to tune in wondering.

He woos the lady from her petulant dreams,
The sleeping soldier from his nightmares,
O silver tongue caress us gently,
Let your succulent words relieve our cares,

They say your jangling spurs distill the night,
An aire delights thy steed, he neighs reply,
Then swift as quicksilver you slip away,
Leaving all thy echoed voice to die,

Ah yes for some delight is found in fable,
The tales be told of some lone troubadour,
He passes on into the velvet night,
Enchanting those both rich and poor.
His voice an echo in the heart and soul,
Across the distance beyond our door.

Night And Day

O babe of mine hush don't cry,
The winds may blow so very strong,
While safe here in my loving arms,
No one can touch or do you wrong.

Up above the moon shines bright
And looks down on your bed,
The comforter is pulled up tight,
A sleeping cap upon your head.

O babe of mine I bid thee sleep
And let your dreams be sweet,
The teddy bear beside your head,
And a kitty to guard your feet.

When the day breaks through the dark
And floods the room with light,
Safely you will greet the sunny morn,
For by your cradle I've spent the night.

O babe of mine there is no place,
Where your mother will not be!
Night and day I'll keep my watch
You'll never be that far from me.

The Wind Rift Vales

Away across the wind rift vales
There is a place so fair,
A soul could wander all the day,
And never know a care.

They whisper as the you stroll along,
There lush and wild and green,
Away across the wind rift vales,
Tis a place where I have been.

Soon a song begins to swell,
The words are sweet and low,
They fill your mouth with melody,
Where ever you may go!

Away across the wind rift vales,
You may just wish to stay,
To cast away your sorrows there,
And gladly lose your way.

Tis sometimes sad within this world,
Our burdens hard to bear,
But not across the wind rift vales,
No you'll never find them there.

Words

We had words today, they were sharp.
How deeply they can cut, wielded by a tongue,
In haste without premeditation we spoke
And all the issues of a bitter heart were sung.

Like shattered glass we hurled our words,
Our faces turned to crimson shades of red,
Had we been armed with anything but words;
Surely we would both be silent and dead.

At once regret rushed forth, alas too late,
Perchance to catch the tail of some slow syllable;
To draw it back across the threshold of deaths gate.
Sadly it slipped into the ear just audible.

Hasty words the cunning enemy of sanity and peace.
When loosed as wolves upon the fallen game,
The trophy now which hangs above each mantel;
Excused by each as though other is to blame.

There is sobbing in the war rooms set apart.
Pallid faces stained with many heartfelt tears,
For wisdom is forsaken in such wordiness,
Until these wounds give way to our fears.

Waters Beneath the Bridge

There is a torrent of generations,
In constant ages they flow,
As waters under the eternal bridge,
Unto that final destination go.

All a part of some great Exodus,
Onward from this furtive plain,
Hearts enmeshed and still alone,
Until at last some land we gain.

I am one and you are one as well,
From birth we join the waters flow,
As angels watch from o'er the bridge,
The waters moving far below.

We are but waters beneath the bridge,
Strangers on a common course,
The journey to the distant sea is set,
And each is caught within the force.

We face the sky while carried on,
Only God shall see us pass,
Beneath the bridge of benevolence,
The streaming human mass.

So carry us vast river wide and deep,
On to that place of common rest,
Beyond the chaos and turmoil here,
Where we shall each be blest.

Then hand in hand we shall be joined,
On that great eternal span,
In tearless joy watch waters flow,
Neath the triumphant bridge of man.

Keeping The Promises

Keeping the promises,
hanging on to the truth,
Sewing the seeds of whimsical youth,
Plow the field and plant the crop,
I will rise up in the morning,
Then I'll work until I drop.

We don't live here forever,
each day growing old,
The heat of passion soon grows cold,
Let us reap the harvest and gather corn,
Soon the earth will tire,
Yielding thistle and thorn.

Cloudy skies bring the rain,
dark skies bring snow,
Here for today and too soon we must go,
Say goodbye to friends our days are now past,
Forever changing seasons,
Nothing in this world will last.

Behind The Walls

A naked man was left without shelter,
The wall was broken and tumbled down,
he did not seek to hide his deeds
But find refuge from the scorners frown.

To everyman there is a longing soul;
Which seeks to hide from eyes that judge,
And revels in the simplicity of asking,
Only he who has deceit will hold a grudge.

He searches his soul and brings forth a harvest,
Golden wheat that God hath granted,
Then builded a wall to house his blessings,
Escaping all the jeers they chanted.

When other men came to imprison him,
He sat down in the midst of them and wept,
So despised was he of such liberty;
They built a place where his kind was kept.

To them the quietness of his countenance
Seemed as the ranting or a madman's rage,
He did not fit the tragedy they had written
So he was judged a heretic without a wage.

What is of value if there be no higher ground,
No choice but to fall beneath death's knife,
Or seek the wisdom God hath granted to men;
Till the soil and reap the harvest that is life.

They tore down his walls and exposed his nakedness,
And so he knelt before the providential majesty,
Then God reared up new walls again around the man;
He covered him with righteousness so none could see.

A Call To Remember

I asked a young fellow the other day
What he knew of Pearl Harbor to my dismay,
He wasn't quite sure so I set him straight,
Praying to God for this nation's fate.

I inquired about D-Day he shook his head,
So I directed him to Arlington's silent dead.
In wonder I walked him through row upon row,
He said I'm sorry sir I didn't know.

September Eleven I said to him then,
Oh yessir I saw it on TV again and again.
So I pressed him to tell his children one day,
To never let apathy steal those memories away.

At long last I beheld a tear in his eye,
Then I knew there was hope freedom wouldn't die,
He wanted to know if asked, who I am.
I'm the Spirit of America, call me Uncle Sam.

Acquainted With Angels

When I was a little boy,
My grandma said to me,
There are some folks in this world,
Who see what others cannot see.

She told me the other morning,
As she rested on her bed,
An angel came and spoke with her
And this is what he said.

I've been sent to tell you,
It won't be very long,
You'll come join us in heaven,
At home where you belong.

Now I've seen angels all my life,
In each face that I hold dear,
She said I've heard rustling wings,
Heard them sing as they drew near.

She said if you look closely hon,
You will see them too!
Never doubt God's promises,
For each and everyone is true.

She did not speak of it much then,
But smiled a lot at me,
And when the angels came for her,
I knew at last that she was free.

The world is large and very wide,
There's things I can't explain,
Loved ones leave us here below,
And angels dance out in the rain.

But since my grandma passed away,
And I tell you this is true,
I've met many people in this life,
And been acquainted with angels too!

Santorini Faces Death

Slowly I descended into the abyss,
That black hollowness of death,
Nauseous, I gagged at the stench,
His foul and fetid breath.

He laughed his rasping chortle,
Tis I, I said as if to steel my edge,
Ah yes, Santorini the morbid poet,
No harm shall befall thee I pledge.

You have spoke oft of me he hissed,
Yet still you cringe when we have met,
You lack the stomach for my work,
And still its finality you cannot forget.

True I said as I grew more bold,
I've written of you in many a song,
How quick and callous in your trade,
Truly this pit is where you belong.

I'll come for you, Santorini, he said,
Someday when your pen has failed,
Of me you shall even wish at last,
But naught with swiftness of me assailed.

With steps more sure I ventured forth,
I clutched the book of endless life,
And as I read its poignant verse,
It cut through death just like a knife.

O' death where is thy horrid sting,
And grave where is thy dark victory,
For light has pierced thee through,
And I and these have been set free.

Then from the blackness all about,
There came a gasp of sudden hope,
Death winced at what these words had said,
And from the darkness spoke.

Begone my day has not yet come,
To reap I have but few and sordid days,
So I shall do my worst 'til then,
The languid cry of pain I'll raise.

So I ascended from that blackened hole,
The book of life clutched in my hand,
And wrote the more of deadly wrong,
Proclaiming the redemption of man.

In Palaces of Gold

Thou golden angel arise
before my eyes thou vision,
Take away these scales,
Release me from this prison.

In palaces of gold to dwell,
In white as fine as wool,
This water from the well,
Pour till my cup is full.

Thou angel from on high,
These palaces doth grace,
My countenance is glad,
Thou hast washed my face.

Whence comes the day of reckoning,
Then these hands shall raise,
In palaces of gold I'll dwell,
And lift my voice in praise.

Come To The Tomb

Come to the tomb where they lay him down,
See the blood left o'er the thorny crown,
Tis empty now He has risen indeed,
And those in chains have all been freed.

The stone is gone and been rolled away,
A risen redeemer has shed the house of clay,
The angel stands at the open tomb,
And a radiant glow drives away the gloom.

See Mary has come and now carries the news,
She who washed the feet of the masters shoes,
The others will come and behold the sight,
Their souls will rejoice in great delight.

Come here's the house where disciples wait,
Watching vigilant at the garden gate,
And here along the Emmaus road,
He walks with two and eases their load.

Come to the house of prayer with me,
Lay your burdens down and let them be,
The tomb is empty where they laid Him down,
And He's prepared for thee a wedding gown.

The Value of Life

"And what is the value of life my son",
The old man asked the boy.
"What do you mean dear father of mine,
What is life if we cannot destroy"?

The value of life is to get what we can,
No matter the cost it may be,
To strive for mastery of everyman,
That's the obvious goal don't you see?

The old man distraught, bowed in despair,
What matter of madman has taught this to the,
The young man replied most matter of fact,
Why father you taught to me.

The old man looked sad recalling his life,
Twas true what his son had said,
The path that he'd forged in life a shame,
And the boy had followed where he led.

It is not the path that you talk most about,
But surely the path that you trod,
The words that you speak will vanish away,
It's your actions that proclaim your true god.

And The River Flows

We spend our days learning how to live,
From the cradle to the grassy grave,
Along the banks of the river of our life,
Sometimes afraid yet learning to be brave.

And the river flows down to the sea,
Away and far from where we stand,
So follow me where the river flows,
Away and far to a very distant land.

We will follow the river as it flows,
Somewhere converging with the sea,
Wading out into the swelling stream,
Carries all of you, carries all of me.

And the river flows a long long way,
Away and far from a weary mind,
Lost in thoughts of our yesterdays.
Away and far we leave it all behind.

We pass the days in toil and grief and joy,
When our hands are folded in the end,
The river moves us on in gentle waves,
Bearing us like a dear and faithful friend.

A little bit of me, a little bit of you
Onward we go out to the sea,
And the river flows along the banks,
Forever there, carries you and carries me.

The Antagonist

This is the staff we lean upon,
In life as well as death,
The truth of what we must become,
As we draw each labored breath.

The defiant soldier on the front,
Who raises the bloodied fist,
The one who marches through defeat,
A most brutal antagonist.

This is the sword we draw for peace,
When others would run in fear,
The steel that leads the bravest heart,
And the eyes that shed each tear.

This is the staff that leads us home,
The broken body gaunt with pain,
Gather close by and bear them on,
Come marching them home again.

Words are not for those brave souls,
Though they speak if we insist,
Bring on the laurels formed in love,
For the beautiful antagonist.

Testimony

If there were a place to hide,
Cover o'er what's held inside,
Then there it is I'd slip away,
And not come out till light of day.

Still everywhere are eyes that see,
Behind the wall that shelters me,
As naked to the human sight,
Just like a candle in the night.

Beholding all my hidden sin,
Judgment for me must soon begin,
And I will stand defiant then,
To bear the cause of common men.

Perhaps is best for one like me,
To take what's given and let it be,
In doing so I will but die,
If not then none should hear my cry.

Go quietly to this world's end,
Soberly and without a friend,
I speak more loudly as I pass,
Then laid to rest beneath the grass.

March to Oblivion

The long days are not long enough,
The short days quickly pass,
We travel in packs like beasts,
A great and seething mass.

Nights we toss upon our beds,
Then arise to march again,
At moments holding close a friend,
Recalling where we've been.

Like a forced march to oblivion,
So pass the days and weeks and years,
Both joy and tragedy come our way,
And then we shed our tears.

What beauty we see is often brief,
Plodding on in search of worth,
Still driven to the endless sea,
On to the place of human birth.

Then and there will we see the truth,
When through it all we understand,
The long strides were well intended,
When we reach the outstretched hand.

An End Of All Things

All things must come to an end,
It is the nature of life,
Lest these hands should idle grow,
And sow the seeds of strife.

In ending we have kept the pact,
Once made so long ago,
Where youth was born from agedness,
As rivers ancient flow.

Thus is justice given its place,
As life ebbs from the mortal shell,
And peace comes to the righteous,
When in submission they fell.

Tis best when life has been well spent,
Not wasted in pursuit of wealth,
Nor given over to wantonness,
At loss of repute or health.

The end of things is set in stone,
For none can e'er escape,
Tis best to sow for eternity,
And in poverty close life's drape.

To pass the veil and fold ones hands,
Then sweetly taste the end,
Departing from this mortal coil,
And do so as a friend.

The Trouble With The heart

The trouble with the human heart
tis oft to easily broken,
When handled with too little care,
or by words roughly spoken.

Far too fragile for a vessel,
which one would carry love about,
It shatters at the slightest jar,
When words would bring us doubt.

And grief is but another dart,
To pierce a heart straight through,
The heaviness of sorrow,
Will stain it deepest blue.

The trouble with the human heart,
Is where it dares to go,
Beyond the edge of reason,
Where the seeds of faith may grow.

Yet the more that it is broken,
With encounters in this way,
The longer still it lingers,
Through pain it learns to stay.

When sodden with life's sacrifice,
In pools of deep remorse,
The trouble with the human heart,
Even there will hold the course.

And when the life has ebbed away,
It beats beyond the grave,
Within the hearts of those well loved,
And those it wished to save.

Like Sand In His Hand

There was a man stood by the sea,
And counted grains of sand,
And though he did most carefully,
Some grains slipped through his hand.

Now as they fell back to the shore,
To him they looked the same,
Obscured by every other grain,
To him it seemed ashame.

A voice came to his troubled soul,
Son, your not the one to blame,
Only God can count these grains of sand,
And know each one by name.

At last in truth he understood,
How infinite God's plan,
To God we are but common grains,
Passing through His hand.

Then as he stood within the light,
Beamed down from God above,
The tears ran down his weathered face,
He was cradled in God's love.

That man walked down the shore again,
Content in this truth so grand,
That God was well aware of us,
As he was each grain of sand.

