

Selected Poems

by

Sam Silva

FOR RACHEL AND HER ART

All poems copywritten to Sam Silva
© 2008 Sam Silva

Cover art by Rachel Davis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT BEGAN WITH A SNOWY MOUNTAIN	04
THE DISEASE OF THE CAROLINAS	05
SONG OF THE SLEEPY FELLOW	06
IN CAROLINA PLACES	07
UPLIFT SWEET SOUL AND LEARN TO TAKE	08
SLEEP WALKING THROUGH THE EVENING NEWS	09
THE DRAUGHT BEFORE THE HARVEST	10
THE LIVES OF OTHER THINGS	11
WHEN WE WAKE TO EARTHLY TREASURES	12
THE POET AND THE PAINTER	14
THE EVOLUTION OF A STRICTLY MODERN IDEAL	15
ART AS PASSION RECOUNTED	16
THE SEASON OF ALL SOULS	17
WHAT INTERFERES WITH THE BUSINESS HERE	18
WHAT THE COLD WEATHER COMES TO MEAN	19
THE IMMIGRANTS	20
DON EDGI'S WEIGHT	21
ART AS PASSION RECOUNTED	22
THE SEASON OF ALL SOULS	23
WHAT INTERFERES WITH THE BUSINESS HERE	24
WHAT THE COLD WEATHER COMES TO MEAN	25
THE IMMIGRANTS	26
DON EDGI'S WEIGHT	27

WHAT BEGAN WITH A SNOWY MOUNTAIN

Poems of pure exhaust
wading with arthritic lines
dulled by pills and smoke and wines
on cold nights when the rain has past
in mercy as it separates
our souls from the evil souls we know.

What's born in Winter, bears the cost
of Springs bright murder at the gates
of History's brave and tragic loss
or otherwise lies low and pines
for that same history as it casts
its own blood dye
on tired and endless fields of snow turned to water and to rain
in muddy rivulets which surpass
the floods of Noah
in their deep and tired pain...

THE DISEASE OF THE CAROLINAS

In a trailer beside the river
clustered by strange dreams
of wildflower and willow
my feet are stuck to this humid tar.

How will I follow you down
on highways the saints deliver
to Florida's golden peninsula? Sara.

And the nights are humid and brown,
their breath is a wheeze against a dew damp pillow
that dreams of a distant star.

Yet sure on that pathway I will
pull my feet from the mortal ground
and swallow the world like a pill.

SONG OF THE SLEEPY FELLOW

Look down on what the Lord has made!
Gaze on the valleys of the strong!
The mind craves dance
...thoughts along
the rhythm of a song afraid
and sung
by April, and her cross,
her flowers.

Though the mind would not be crucified
...never having lived and died
that word which other words bespeak
when mortal images are hung
by chance
whose ego moans and sighs with loss
to toss
and turn
the burning hours
that keep the day,

though the mind is an indolent shepherd
wandering its way
among the hills
and pastures of the meek...

IN CAROLINA PLACES

Soaking the skoal wrap
...on queasy feet we come
to dip our snuff
and lie around
the porch
where march winds
touch and torch
the stuff
of oozing Spring

in Carolina places
at the dead end of all life.

The rusty water tap
and the thirst for everything,
subdued

...come see!, what Spring indeed has done!
with this old baseball cap
slung sideways on the head
and the juices wiped on the lingering cuff
close to these grown over fields
in such a valley of the dead....

UPLIFT SWEET SOUL AND LEARN TO TAKE

Four walls do not a prison make;
they seem more like a birthday cake!
"Four walls, these walls, these four" I say
they feel more like a holiday.
To have your sex with other men
who later stab you with a pen!
Or be the kind of prison bard
who throws his urine at the guard!
Four walls! Four walls! A lovely gift!
They cause the sweet soul to uplift.
Uplift sweet soul! And learn to take
...four walls do not a prison make.

SLEEP WALKING THROUGH THE EVENING NEWS

A country's junk...the low gas!,
the bald tire!

Pursuant to a cigarette and beer
...the evening news!

Where a nightmare unravels with its fire.
A bomb with all our names...a burning fuse!

I am too drunk with dull fatigue!,
too sick with smoke
to really care.

I cull the dry dust of my past
...go outside and sniff the breeze.

A pretty symphony by Greig
awaits me up the stair
...and I follow the hairline of my ease
when things get deep.

Oh drunk and lovely deed
...you never touch me anywhere
except within the recess of my sleep.

THE DRAUGHT BEFORE THE HARVEST

The driest fires burn the years
close to my ashen cigarettes.
A pile of wind and unspent tears
and summer heat
and blue fatigue

...the oracles lay down their meat
in lonely lonely prophecies
...we sit to dine with dull regrets
and watch the fires come to us
and pray with silent prayers for rain
while blowing smoke and air on dust.

And all the seas expand a league.
The polar ice caps melt and fall
into that dread deep of the seas.
The driest fires keep our fears

...dry hot wind and memories
which make the skull bones ache with pain!
Oh darkening clouds! Our blasphemies
beg storms to cleanse the meaning
of it all...

THE LIVES OF OTHER THINGS

Running from the stick stag
and the bully born

from the fag fuck
and the bitch jive

with a gentle hand enmeshed
and with a liver torn.

Running...but barely running
as the toes have turned
and the lungs have burned
with cigarettes and stale-smoke
which coughs and sings

...lying disenchanted on the bed
while a searing pain goes through the head
...and the telephone rings.

Running from those who twist and turn the mind
...they would be breaking all the bones
...they would be mashing brains with stones
...in the scream of their harrowing laughter
they would be ruining
the lives
of other things...

WHEN WE WAKE TO EARTHLY TREASURES

How did the rich man ruin his son?
With a wife ensconced in coverlets
and queenly in her purple rouge
but full of steel much like a gun
and full of ice for the mansion's prince.

How did the son reward the king?
With the gutter gold of everything!
With the ways and means to spend his wealth
...to steel and lie
like brazen filth
and never feel the less for it.

How did the wife reward the spouse?
...with terror in the golden house!
With guilt
at the edge
of a serpent's tongue
with which the prince became a mouse
and went his way to an early death.

How did the mother love her child?
With wedding parties shrill and loud!
With ways to fix his poor esteem
and send his childhood terrors south

until he struck her in the mouth
and sucked the bottle like her breast
and likewise struck his wife as well
and raised her children up in Hell
those rare times that he saw the lot.

How did the mother love the Lord
...at funerals which the dead afford!
...with rancor toward the bitter end
toward husband, child, and finally friend
for all but the last had died before.

The fool plays with his deadly rod
...and lovely maidens look toward God
and money
such a god might send.

And given that, they fall asleep
counting coins the way fools count sheep
in order to earn what others keep
like precious royal seed gone deep
in the belly of a whore.

THE POET AND THE PAINTER

My life!...a painting filled
discretely
but with passion
where the colors melt and mingle
yet stay pure.

Therefore I work my words.
The light in my eyes!
Impossible light!
...the fire in your canvas
alike the burning skies
with the rendering so skilled

where you paint my life as well.
My poems pray to the birds
...Oh dove and feather quilled!
But you, who are the artist,
gave the vision so distilled
that I tingle
with its essence
and delight.

THE EVOLUTION OF A STRICTLY MODERN IDEAL

What a beautiful mausoleum
for a royal soul to hold its cup!
What a love for all of God's creatures
except for the wretched human mass.

You would give bread to a Tiger!,
to a tender cub, sweet milk to sup.
To the fawn and elk the wolves devour,
a supper of leaves; to the wolf, a flower!

And dogs will run wild and beggars be scorned!
And factories of fire keep the human zoo!
For what is a world without animals?
...and humankind,
filthy, wretched, and blind?
Let them do as they will!
Let them labor and kill
in the vulgar way that a fool's crown is thorned!

For art must be born of beauty,
and beauty that manifest desire
by which nature wills and rings a fire.
And yes! with such instinct as comes to play,
that same instinct that the self may acquire
...perhaps someday
with the Earth as a center
they will be animals too!

ART AS PASSION RECOUNTED

Blue gray overcast
and gentle drizzle

on narrow street
and wild weed
of remnant swamp.

The mind is turquoise
and the heart is purple

and the lovers keep their porch
and eat
sandwiches, and drink
their rich thick coffee
or smoke, and muse
mentally
stories of the bygone beat

beyond these chimneys
of late Winter.

We, of such a sky,
have passed the torch
of pure adventure

and more easily recline
each to each
with our own art

...the days good work
is what we do
while rainy moments
pass, and enter
into skies
gray blue.

THE SEASON OF ALL SOULS

In such a manner
as each unlucky star
who found fate
like an easy mate
among the music
and the sighs
of Autumn
and its late-night whiskey bars
...that likewise
ghosts who keep the elements
deep in the cash of the city,
deep in the hunger of the earth
prevail with all their humble tears
upon those red
October skies
...harvest to kiss
and fruit to seed
among the living
and the dead
...the corpse who walks!
...the haunts who bleed!

whose nature
holds up both despair and bliss

and whose universe, talks
within the codes on my computer screen,

and, on the other hand,
whose electrons dance
with sex
and wine of the heart
in graceful cheers
upon such air
as kindles frost...

In such a manner
is the fire of nighttime found,
and hanging from the pillory of chance
those smug in their piety
drink a drunken shock of devil leers
discovering the terror
of the lost.

WHAT INTERFERES WITH THE BUSINESS HERE

Edgi is always sleeping late
because sometimes the mind
meanders
beyond the realm of money
and its shiny objects

...toward more abstract
contusions of light
given narrative
in gorgeous dreams
that last
a never ending sleep

....after hours
of counting money,
counting cattle,
counting sheep....

WHAT THE COLD WEATHER COMES TO MEAN

A serenade of ice cold rain
...pitter patter doze of brain
in this, the warm room and afar
where snores forgo all sense of pain
and numbness is its golden gem

...such cloudy days!, yet, like a star.
The tortured minds of the insane
receive their due warmth from such cold
...a kiss that comes to cuddle them
should other luck have dimmed their eyes
where happenstance has made them old.

THE IMMIGRANTS

Abuela Rachel
feeds the mind such edibles
of insight
as enlighten the savor
of the senses
with the meal she's planned.

Delicate morsels
spiced picante
as is the wisdom in such pain

...such a strange commingling flavor
from a meal of hope
and the vegetables uncanned

on a colder day up north
bringing forth
in long life
Winter and its rain!

DON EDGI'S WEIGHT

Rhino muscle!
Pig fat!
The sacred weight he must employ!
A haunch that broke
the place he sat!
...a note
for this Latino boy
coughing up the crucifix
sniffing with angst and cold

...the weirdest monster in the world!
in dislocation where he sits
praying for the weight to go
and for life's journeys to pass on
till he is svelte content and old
with such a journey's lovely song....

EDGI THE GREAT UNKOWN

Never knowing where I go
toward tropic isles
or fields of snow
when summer's wind
the pasture blows
I joke with Edgi
...gray jokes too
...much like the cat who chews the weeds
to issue forth its greening spew
in context unjudged for its deeds
while armies blow the world apart.

Where evil elves lie down and choke
Why, Edgi is the dragon head,
the fleshy bread and crazy bloke
the fire mouth that flames the dead
...it's dead word broken from the start
with all profusely naughty art
as sparks and sputters humor
in the blue fire of the wicked fart

...cancerous and horrid gas
...this world of his!
...this lady in the green spandex
...this terrible and rotten ass!
where evil elves are laughing
as is tyrannosaurus rex.
Ah! What a thing it is and was
to joke with Edgi on the grass
...never knowing what is next!

FATE FLOWS ON TOWARD WINTER

One direction in the dark divide!
Morning shivers
with both cold and fear.
The sky outside
is one long cloud
pregnant
with torrential snow.

The wastes of Hell
whose winter rivers
mire like a frozen tear

lift up the lies
that living lies can tell
each other in that proud
wasteland living truth would fear
if only there could be somewhere
such innocence could go.

BEING A BEAST AND OF THE DEAD

Being a beast and of the dead
...I want no pain
nor consternation
..paths that mark divinity
or devil-doldrums
here in this world unmade
just as I was unmade
in this, your devil-city!

Being an old man
with a hairy face like a dog
I would howl all night
like a hound that heard no one
and without
the least sense of tension
in the blood of my yell
in the mindless gift of my grief.

The dead! The dead beast!
Spring was there!...but you murdered it!
Here is autumn with its animal ghost
ascending in smoke to the heavens!
Here is the dark tide
and the dark month
with its wrinkled leaf...

HOBO SONG

On such a desperate path as this,
the dead in Jesus shuffle through
such streets as March has marked with wind

toward destiny's convenience stores
and soda shops
and libraries

to read religion for a shoe
that keeps the journey wise and dumb.

In a world of pedophiles and whores
who offer up the sacred kiss
the meat of saints is bought and tinned

...from whence they came...they have no clue
...and much less where they're going to
in this disaster of God's wrath

only that they always sinned
in doing what they always do
or failing even to do that

and that they met some cherished friends
on such a desperate path....

FREEDOM

When I feel good
I love
to lie awake in the dark
...while the machine flickers
and online music
murmurs cadence

and consider, just consider
a thousand ideas and options
both lunatic and real

or watch the flashing
travelogue of images
either imagined or
from the grasses of the past
and the seeds
that just might bloom
even after I'm gone

...and night passes this way
and in the morning
my lover's brilliant paintings
infuse me again
with such dark inscriptions

along with the light
born to us from the Sun
and the idea within

which is God.

ON OUR WAY TO ASHES

I give you so little
...and I long
to sing a hard-worked life
as a labour of song,
my strong
and inspired
and sensual
flower of a wife

for your grandest
hope
in the blossoming day

your smallest
prayer
and ache and desire

when the wind blows on
toward summer and autumn
with its own
dry poem
set fire.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sam Silva has published at least 150 poems in print magazines, including Sow's Ear, The ECU Rebel, Pembroke magazine, Samisdat, St. Andrew's Review, Charlotte Poetry Review, Main Street Rag, and many more. Has published at least 300 poems in online journals including Jack Magazine, Comrades, Megaera, Poetry Super Highway, physik garden, Ken again, -30-, Fairfield Review, Foliate oak, and dozens of others. Three legitimate small presses have published chapbooks of his, three of those presses have nominated work of his for Pushcart a total of 7 times. Bright Spark

Creative of Wilmington purchased rights to his first full length book EATING AND DRINKING and put the book out through author house at there expense. He now has many books and chapbooks available at <http://www.lulu.com/samsilva54>. And his spoken word poetry is available at the major digital markets such as Apple iTunes.