



SIPPING

poetry
by

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JACKSON

Sipping

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David Michael Jackson 2008

Dedicated to:

Mary Janet Jackson

*She was a single violet
Beside a mossy stone
And she lived out her life
Unknown.*

*Oh the ships still sail
The deep blue sea
And the waves keep rolling
Along,*

*And the trains still roll
On tracks of steel
And the world never noticed
She's gone,*

*But oh the difference
To me.
Yes, oh the difference
To me!*

~

Forward

by Summer Breeze

Pablo Neruda may come to mind once the reader becomes engaged with the simplistic crafting and flow of the poetics of David Michael Jackson.

Poet, Ward Kelley, once asked David Jackson, “Joseph Campbell said that poets are simply those who have made a profession and a life style of being in touch with their bliss. Do you think so?” And David replied, “In touch with finding that bliss among tears, the poet is in touch with the simple life much like the monk, the musician, the artist.”

And David Michael is all of these (well, perhaps not the monk)...his music, songs and paintings can be found on his web site at artvilla.com and in private collections.

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Sipping

I only have apples for you,
wine sap apples
hanging red and green
from twisted trees
and lying on the ground,
brown and rotten,
soft and mushy.
Not very good,
but they will do
for a break from the field,
for a break
from the work
and the
hot
hot
sun.

My brown eyes
her green eyes
her red dress
my brown eyes
her red shoes
the spring trees
the blue sky
my brown eyes
her green eyes
her green
green
eyes...

I am.
I have been read by one's and two's.
I have been seen by tens
or even hundreds.
You can see me
on the street.
I am.
You can hear my voice
in
the silence,
or
in the
crowd
at the
ballgame.
I am everyone
I am no one
I am the man on the street.
Tell everyone I was here,
right here,
now,
on this spot of soil,
in this something,
this
recognition of something.
Tell everyone.

I have eaten the last grape.
I hold the vine in my hands
and I throw it into the yard.

I wonder of the purpose
of the vine
(as you would, as anyone would)
to feed me,
to reproduce,
to seek the light.
When I have eaten my last grapes
I will, perhaps, understand.
Perhaps,
but the vine doesn't care anymore.
It just lies there
in the green
green grass.

The trees are whispering to me.
They tell me the rain will come,
that spring will bring new leaves,
that birds will nest
in my branches.
They tell me not to concern myself
with the fire
nor the blight.
They tell me to stand strongly
and to lift my arms
to the light.

My tongue touches
the roof of my mouth.
My lips are stuck together
and pop apart.
I can feel the air
rushing
through my chest.

I hold this page in my hand
and
I read
these words.

Now sunrise brings a cup of coffee to welcome the day.
Our lives are measured with these days
which are poured into cups
and mixed with sorrow and joy.
We say things like
“I’ll always remember.”
“I’ll always love you.”
and we are blown like
dry leaves in a whirlwind,
rising for a moment,
then settling,
to make room
for other leaves
to be blown,
to rise,
to settle.

The trees live and die.
Each blade of grass
leans to the summer light
and breaks in the winter wind.
The birds live and die.
The seasons turn
like a merry go round and
we ride the pretty horses and
we hear the pretty music and

we play in the warm sun
as the merry go round
goes around
and around and around.

There is a chill in the day,
already the birds gather,
already the insects are frantic.
Already the leaves turn
to browns and yellows.
Savor the day.
Sip it
like a glass of
fine wine.
Breathe deeply
and glory in the song
of the cricket.
Cup the day in your palm like
spring water
and drink.

My little wife
thinks I'm odd and lazy
as she flutters,
constantly working.
She is a little worker bee,
she flutters gracefully,
picking this up,
straightening that.
She is gathering nectar
and I am in the hive,
sipping.

All the Summer Nights

Just a quest,
wasn't it?
We were caught,
it seems,
in that painting which
captured the moment,
in that touch of the hand,
that kiss, yes surely in that
kiss.
The moonlight has become passé
it seems.
Vanity.
All the summer nights were
there in the touch of
a tiny hand.

Oh the folly of destiny!

To the Bed Pan Person

Nursing home,
clean white
dry sheets
every day now.
There are the memories of another place,
another time,
wet sheets every day,
bladder infection,
kidney failure.
“No, don’t think about it.” he says.
The bed pan persons
are doing the job,
as important as the doctors,
as the nurses,
totally
unheralded.
There is a place for you
in my tears.
We need
heaven
for you.

Again

The ends of his fingers
stroke the keys as he
tries again.
“Oh to dance again,
to run again,
to simply
flow down the
stairs
again.
Oh to play second base again!”,
he thinks.
Millions of dead planets revolve
around millions of stars and he
wants so much to matter.
In lieu of that he’d
settle for
second base
again.

War

I knew nothing of the war
except for what they told me,
that it was for freedom.
All I really remember is the boy
lying on a concrete slab.
I remember the dried blood on his cheeks.
I can't make out the race so well,
he's a brownish boy
just lying there with his
bullet wounds,
staring that stare.
His arms are at his side in
the photo
and he's lying on his back
on that gray slab.
That's all I remember, really,
just the boy.
No soccer matches for him.
Mom won't take him in the SUV.
He's lying on his back on that concrete slab.
No one called the police.
It won't be on the news.
They won't interview the parents and
seek our help to
find
the
killer.
There will be more
at
ten.

Why These Windows Move Mountains

I am worn weathered wood.
I have seen the storms,
felt the hot sun,
endured the wind until
I am cracked.
My colors have faded into
burnt sienna's from red under
the sun's rays.
I have seen the owl at night and
the hawk in the day for
I am a window in this wood,
this weathered wood.
I am a window or
I am nothing.
I am a window.
Sneak up, take a peek
into my panes.
She will be there, sitting
at the table,
having her tea
or holding her cat
quietly.

Stream of Thought

Strange
word to start with,
don't go there you say,
don't carry the
world on your
shoulders waiting for
something so nebulous as a
word to take you
to a rose,
to a
willow tree beside the
stream of thinking.
You had something to
say,
something that mattered
in the morning of
dew covered
coolness
melting into
silence and
birds.

Burn the Art

Thoughts of burning art come again.
To have placed any value in it
seems quaint tonight.
A simple fire without ceremony
is all that is needed, really,
just call it collateral damage.
No one will notice
anyway.
Vincent had the chance,
he blew it,
and now they gather
around these pieces of his fabric
like there are lives to be saved somehow,
while the children play with the depleted uranium.

No Whores

I have no whores with broken heels
to write about.
I am not famous among the flop houses.
I did not spend last night or last year
on the street or in some
roach infested place which
would mean so much in a modern poem.
I have not drunk myself to sleep.
I am not Bukowski, no one showed up
at my door to write about,
I have no whores to quote in this
or any other poem.
I did not abandon all to head to Paris like Ernest,
was not caged and carried through half filled or
half empty streets.
I have thrown my angst against cubicle walls,
factory floors, subdivisions, all
benignly taking their toll.
It's a quiet desperation which
leaves me
wishing for
whores and flophouses.

The Loner

He lived in a small house beside the river.
We would only see him on the road,
riding a bicycle with a small motor,
an eccentric loner puttering by on that cycle.
He didn't drink,
caused no trouble it seems.
We kids didn't really know him
except for the motorized bicycle
and the river.
I guess every group of kids has a loner,
full of mystery,
to speculate about.
I think of him to this day.
Was he a poet or just a lonely man?
He is stuck forever in a memory that
forgets almost everyone,
forgets all the wasted or plentiful lives.
(How do we not waste our lives?).
The famous dead poets are merely names.
These words are just magnetic spots on
a disk somewhere.
If the bill is not paid, then
the ones will become zeros
and I will have pattered by.

I Have Painted A Picture

I have painted a picture
of apples and pears
on a table
with
a vase of poppies,
then I ate the apples,
I ate the pears,
the poppies dried,
and I broke the vase.
The apple tasted sweet,
the pears were so juicy,
and the poppies were the yellow
of the sun.

Follow Your Dream

What is your dream?
You have to follow that.
That is what is important,
it's not education,
it's not job,
it's the dream.
It's something to fall asleep with
every night of your life.
A life which matters
only through love and dreams.
My dream is this.
Today I did this toward my dream.
Now I can sleep
a poet's sleep.

Like Anything Matters

Did I expect this,
this sense of expectation.
Death sits at the window
asking stupid questions,
waiting for me to
get through here.
Art is on the other side of
the window,
waiting for me
to paint in red,
throwing paint like it
matters, like I matter, like
anything matters.

Children of War

We'll give them all to the
war, these children of
our hearts, we'll let them march
away, we'll wait for their return,
we'll wait beside the spring, we'll
wait beside the spring,
hoping for the best,
wishing for the best,
praying for the
rest.

Oh will you rest beside me
as the water gently flows?
Oh will you walk beside me
when the water gently flows?
I'll carry you into
the forest.

We'll make it our home.
I'll run among the branches
until I find you,
waiting for me
like
an
angel.

Yes.

We'll give them all to the
war, these children of
our hearts, we'll let them march away,
we'll wait for their return, we'll
wait beside the spring.

We Remember

My humble hands have made
love and lovely things,
and now we remember.
My humble lips have made
love and said kind things.
My thighs have felt your hands.
My ears have loved the sound of
your voice,
and now we remember.
As you say my name,
willow trees grow near the stream.
We sat beside the river,
we fished, we
made love, we
came to be the summer
breeze.

Gets up every morning and joins the crowd

He
doesn't live that life so he
gets up every morning and joins the crowd.
Which shore?
He said petals from an apple tree,
yes, petals from an apple tree,
and leaves falling silently.
Which shore?
He said petals from an apple tree
and
summer music,
and the summer breeze,
and he washes up on the hundredth poem or the thousandth
poem or
footsteps on a stair,
washes up on the shores of reason and reaches,
washes up with the word barrel
empty.

Boredom

The clock ticks but I cannot hear it.
My spirit is not eased.
This long day of moments,
here I sit,
here I sit,
here I sit,
chin in hands,
chin in hands.

Dreams

There are no dreams left
in the dream barrel,
only work to be done and
hope.
Hope will do, to fill a day,
to walk among the words again as if
dropped into clouds which
wait for me to
fall
silently into the sky
swollen with the tears
of the children
of
war.
Oh, I will fall
in silence
no more.

The Great Poets

He tries to fathom the
supposed great poets.
“Supposed”, he says plainly
as his eyes droop,
“Boring“, he says as he tries again.
His eyes droop again
with all who
must be taught
to be understood,
who must be the in the brain of every student
in order to be great.
Oh
Sisyphus!
Screw you and all the gods I do not know,
all the twisted verse I
disdain.
I scream to the winds.
If you must explain it to me, then
don’t
read it
to
me.

I Am No Pound

I am no Pound,
just an ounce of pure innocence
at best.
We forget the child
and are very lucky if we
are suddenly old enough, or
fragile enough
to examine a stone
or laugh as we
run,
or explore
again,
wander the creek again.
Finding the perfect skipping stone takes
patience,
must be important to
be worth the effort.
The stone is lost,
as are we,
after a few great _ _ _ skips.

In These Cluttered Times

Somehow these places eventually lose
identity too in these
cluttered times.
Passenger creek still weaves through
sugar camp hollow.
There are still legends and Indians for
awhile,
for a short while.
Up Grant's Chapel Road
Grant's Chapel being, of course, long gone,
there being left only a cemetery with
one
stone,
empty coffin,
just up from the biggest oak in any parts
which is at the deserted settlement, just off the trail of tears,
which is
gone,
the oak, being there in some wealthy back yard,
the settlement cleaned away except in my memory.
It was once to be had by slipping around the pond,
the pond being now gone,
and the frogs.
Yet Passenger Creek still weaves it's history
through sugar camp hollow
where it has been said that Indian ghosts protect
confederate gold
for
a little
while
longer.

A Tiny Bit of Grass

I saw this bird today.
It was just a brief instant.
I was in a parking lot headed to
a job.
He was at the edge of the lot in a tiny bit of grass we had
left him.
There was this instant that I knew
for certain,
for absolute certain,
that this bird was important,
so important that I would remember the motion of his body
as he
paused for an instant to
look at me,
so important that I would remember
how he moved,
as important as a red wheelbarrow,
or a player on a stage.
He raised his wings
and made that poking motion at the ground and
he was important,
not just another bird,
noticed by just another person
because there is no such thing as
just another bird
or just another person.
There is only one bird,
only one
person.

Oh, Hello

Willie and Lobo
tonight,
and the summer nights ,oh
the summer nights!
The hazy moon says
hello,
the last of the brandy says
goodbye,
and we come and go into the
summer
nights,
and we become the wind in the grasses,
and the hot breeze which passes
makes us like leather,
tough enough to take the heat.
Ah,
bring it on.
I'll sit here and run my toes in the freshly cut grass
and tough it out.

VE VURK 'TIL VE DROP

Can we civilize the salamander,
make him
sit in a cubicle
for eight hours
exactly?
The animals don't stand for any of that crap.
My dog knows what is important,
it is important to sniff at that bush.
I,
on the other hand,
have trouble with
the importance of things.
Other people and I
don't allow ourselves time to sniff
the air for
anything really
important.
Other people and I
don't have time for that bush
unless
it is landscaped into our orderly little lives like
the trees in our yard which are
planted just so
and
made to look just so,
like
that were
important,
but my dog knows what is important
and I, we
unfortunately have forgotten.

Stupidity of Man

More trivial
and evil by the connection
of lockstep,
and
stupidity.

There are 200 nukes in Pakistan and India

If you cover yourself with manure
then radiation cannot affect
you.
The NUKES are sAFE mAN
nO pROBLEM,
everything's fine,
and if you happen to be from another galaxy and
find this
amid the fossil remains,
well,
we blew ourselves up.

Why God Put Us Here

And I didn't know
what to say,
the correctness of the thing,
the oneness, or the
randomness of the thing,
in the morning,
in the evening,
in
nothingness,
which is where we end up when
we try,
or when we don't
try
with out hope,
which is why God
put
us
here

And What If I Should Win

The music flows like the sunrise settles
upon the horizon, like the
wind itself
settles upon the
contours of the
windows into
the soul
itself, or
into the poem
of hope itself,
yes, the embodiment of hope within the music,
within the music, the embodiment of the
music, the
soul, the visual,
the
art,
at least
tries,
at least
settles into the trickle
of a small stream
somewhere
making
almost silent
peace.

What Matters

and in the twilight of our wonder,
will we succumb?
I think not.
Rather, we will hope again,
love again,
until
the beginning again,
until the breeze blows softly again,
and the simple suggestion of
softness
matters again.

For Willie

Who am I to say musician,
to say poet.
Who am I
to say artist.
Every human needs to say
these,
these are the only hands,
these are the supreme hands.
I am the only man who ever lived,
a mammal in a lair,
snarling when cornered,
like Dylan's wolverine,
gasping for the last breath,
for the last word ever uttered by
mankind itself.

Once Every Lifetime

When the muses meet
they will say
that summer comes every year.
I say that summer
comes
once every lifetime
but only if
you
listen,
only if you
care
to listen.
Each moment
carries
a poet
in a cage
dragged through
the
street.

For Bill Monroe

He's a picture on the wall of the Bluebird Café,
and he's hugging that fiddle,
he's showing the way.
He's got an old cowboy hat that's been with him for awhile.
He's a fiddler man who can make that fiddle smile,
can make that fiddle cry, make that fiddle sing,
make that fiddle bring,
a memory of my granddad and my grandma's lemonade
and hard work and sunshine and sleeping in the shade.
He's a picture on the wall
of the Bluebird Cafe
and he's showing, he's showing the way.
Now I love that old fiddler man so stomp the floor with me,
and he'll take you back to a time when bluegrass was king,
and hard times and hard living meant character,
and he shared with her, and he shared with us,
and he's hugging that fiddle
he's showing, he's showing the way.
Now make that fiddle cry,
make that fiddle sing,
make that fiddle bring,
a memory of my granddad
and my grandma's lemonade,
and hard work and sunshine
and sleeping in the shade.
He's just a picture on the wall
of the Bluebird Cafe
and he's showing the way,
he's showing the way.

Peace and War

I cannot hear the peace
in the roar of
the drums.

I cannot see the peace
in the brightness of
the bombs.

I cannot taste the peace
in the bitterness of
the hatred.

My heart cannot feel the peace
in the rough textures of
the street,
and I cannot smell the peace
amid the tears of
gas.

Such rocky souls we are
when children gather to throw
rocks at
tanks.

Poem To Mindy

and there she is,
my cat,
She demands that my hands
touch her fur and
she demands my
total
attention.
She knows she's the only cat
that matters,
that ever mattered.
She knows the cats of Egypt
I sometimes think she was there herself and added that
unknown quality to
the relief's in the temple walls, for
she is the only cat that ever mattered as she whimpers that
demanding little
raorw .

Passenger Creek

Passenger Creek she calls to me.
Those boy steps are wandering
her banks,
thy banks.
She calls like the ancient winds.
She calls with the quietest
of voices,
your voices,
thy voices.
Her green waters flow
in me,
my brothers,
my
father
beside my mother's tiny little house,
beside the creek,
Passenger Creek.

Appraisal

Well it's appraisal time and.....
Wriggling,
wriggling,
wriggling on the pin,
the eye in the lens,
"It's a bug."
"No
It's an asset
A resource."
"No"
"It's a bug."
Wriggling!
The pin!
Oh, the pin!
Sweating on the slide!
The heat!
The heat!
The heat of the light!
The eye again.
"It's a bug."
"No, no, it needs a speech, yes that's it, a speech."
"Stop it."
"It's getting away."
"Don't let it get off the property."
"Damn."
"It's gone."
"Look."
"Over there!"
"It's a butterfly!"

Madonna and Elvis

The best painter of our time is wasting away somewhere.
The greatest scientist is working
while we are chasing Madonna
with cameras.
Somewhere some lonely Beethoven works tonight
and, maybe,
throws some paper,
some paper which maybe,
will be
in some museum
some
day.
He beats his head against some wallpapered wall.
Somewhere some unknown poet taps taps taps at the keys
leaving scraps behind
to be thrown away by
Elvis.

Shut Up or Stand Still

Hell Jackson
why don't you just
shut the fuck
up.
You might hit the truth.
Good people,
all
trying to make my life more efficient
can
slow me down
to
a
stan
d
s
t
i
l
l

Princess and Gnomes

She's lying in there,
and I am in here in this world
of dragons and knights
wandering among the gnomes,
castles and flowers
in the
sun,
and she is my princess,
asleep
on a bed of
leaves,
and I am her king,
this night,
and I will meet my princess
when she awakes
and finds me,
here,
in
my
robe.

Poem About Poems

Poems, Poems, Poems!
Magnetic spots on diskettes,
ink spots on paper!
Words flung at the walls
or
held within,
or lost
like those great paintings
of olden days
which were stored in the dampness
of the basement,
like the missing Van Goghs
which had been
used for archery practice!
Words scattered like rice at a wedding,
like
pigeon droppings,
like smoke which drifts and dissipates
in the crisp morning air!
Poetry is like the breeze which ripples the flag.
For an instant
the flag defies gravity
and
we notice.

Downsized

I hear voices outside my cubicle,
they are talking work.
They have no work talk for me for I am being downsized.
I was big, I was busy, I was useful,
now I am small for I am being downsized.
I have almost nothing to do.
.....I hear people passing by my cubicle...
I recognize their voices,
and say to my self..."That's So and So."
"They are keeping them." "They are worthwhile."
I hear them talking about work. I am jealous.
Oh, I was so big!
I carried the company's future on my broad shoulders.
I walked with other giants and spoke of 12 hour days and
reports to even bigger giants, now long gone.
There's no telling how long it will take me
to get enough self-confidence to get another job.
I may have had some once,
and self-respect,
so long ago, I don't remember any more.
So let's go,
downsize my ass
and get me the fuck out of here.
(Get yourself out of there you fool!)
How did you come to this,
a downsized fool in a downsized cubicle
in a downsized world
eating downsized shit?

Alone

and so I sit,
alone,
yet never alone,
for you are here with me,
and these black and white scribbles which we call words
join us, somehow,
and make the frozen winter land the same, somehow,
as the balmy beaches,
and the fact of our locations,
the very facts of our lives are
somehow joined in these
intentions of greatness,
and of course not knowing even what that is, we,
we,
we
try
and we,
we,
we
fail, so here we are again
in the winter land, on the beach
with this inability to say just what we mean and by
the very nature of our confusion we,
we,
we
try again.

Ode To Engineers

For Stan McGill.
and the engineers,
oh the engineers!.....
I went to a colleagues funeral,
an awesome engineer.....gone.....
Because of our products,
engineers touch everyone silently and unknown,
Unheralded, slipping into millions of homes.
When you touched your fridge today,
it didn't kill you and it works -
an engineer!
I know these people, square, conservative,
speaking in tongues of technology....
mostly the same kinds of people who fix things,
except
Smarter, or luckier.
The good ones are the ones who came from nothing,
farmer's sons and daughters,
who know how to use
wire and tape and a wrench,
the engineers!
I remember the old fifties engineers with their
pocket protectors full of pens. They taught us well.
These folks go mostly unnoticed
and die unknown.
Hail to you engineers!
I wanted you to know that I noticed
and I'll say this so only you will truly understand
because only you really knew why you worked so hard.
It didn't hurt me and it's still working!
Thank you!

And To Last

and to last
through
the moment,
to last through
the
moment,
and to notice the
moment,
the flower,,
the
rose.
Purpose?
You ask of purpose?
Ask not,
ask the rose.

Imperfect World

and now my love, these words
painted in an imperfect world
cannot be more than
graffiti on a subway wall,
but is Wordsworth
not graffiti
on a subway wall?

In the matter itself,
are we not always there.

The laws of science say that all is decay,
all is decay!
So, what are we to do?
What is the element which is our catalyst?
Try anyway.
That is what we are to do,
say it anyway,
do it anyway,
be the ball.

Worry and Debate

Worry and debate
sends hope far away.
Seldom do windows open into
reality,
seldom do poets cry for nothing,
for hope maybe,
for love surely,
for nothing, never.
Simply write he says
simply write.
Do not stop to think.
Thinking is out of vogue with me.
Carry me there to the edge of
the water,
to the side of the cliff,
so I may see the river,
so that I may hope again,
hope for the natives who walked these ways,
hope for me
again

So Here We Are

Poets know about letting go,
about the stream which flows
like thin molasses on a hot day,
red and orange dolphins
swimming in the purple sea
of my thoughts,
but...
you already know
the water which flows like a
cliché into your
consciousness from my
consciousness.
You already know
how the arms hang long and thin
and the fabric lays just so.
You already know of the wetness of the street
in the darkness.
You already know
of the fingers in your hair and
the lips.
So, there we are again, once again
in the twilight, trying to remember the
dawn.
So here we are
and here we
have always
been.

Most People

Most people don't do art.
It's important to them that all
the beans are out of the shells and
in the jar.
Most people don't write poems.
It's important to them that
all the envelopes are addressed and
are neatly stacked in a pile
while I stack
words in a falling down heap on this page
and hope
that one of these people will take a little time from
their beans and envelopes
to chuckle at my story of my
mother's blind chicken,
or of that rooster who used to
fly at me until
I was afraid to go outside, and how
eventually
we had him
for dinner.
Most people have their roots firmly
planted in the soil
and don't have this longing
or need at all
while some are like you and I
and have twisted themselves into
sinuous knots searching
for the light that
most people, maybe, already have or
don't even want.

Quickly

Write fast.
Don't stop!
Let me hear those keys click.
Don't you dare look up,
you might miss this moment,
out there,
somewhere,
my soul on the paper.
Life ticks and tocks
the time away,
slowly,
one long endless moment
at a
time,
waiting,
waiting
for
something.
Don't look up.
You might
miss it.
This moment
p a s s e s,
now this other moment
r e p l a c e s it.
Each long
moment laughs at the setting sun
and
life passes
so
quickly.

Carry Me Home

Carry me home,
home to the creek
and the water
and the leaves on the trees.

Carry me home
past the worry and the frantic pace to
the water and the dew on the grass
and the summer days
when grasshoppers are plentiful bait for
the fishes.

Carry me home to the field
and the newly plowed earth
and that smell of the soil
recently
turned
so that I may replant myself with hope
for a new
harvest,
so that I may kill the weeds which have grown over me
until

I cannot see the light.

Carry me home past the roads, past
the buildings, past the red lights.

Carry me home through the darkness of a thousand nights
spent
grasping for something which is not there, something which
could
never be there or
anywhere.

It Is Enough

It is not enough to say that I miss you.
It is not enough to say that the world didn't line up with
flowers when you died.
Nothing will ever be enough.
Nothing will ever be enough to say,
to do.
Time will not help.
It is enough
to say that time will not win.
It will not win.
It will not win.
The moment will win,
the meaningless passing moment,
the single note of the violin
passing into the air
then gone,
gone,
gone.
If that is the only victory there is,
then, that is
victory,
my friend,
my dear and sweet
and wonderful
friend.

Out Into The Cold Rain

Out into the cold rain
goes my baby.
Out into the driving wind
goes my child.
Out into the cruel world
I send my honey,
for even the bitterest wind
is sweet,
even the driving rain
brings the wet street in the morning and
that certainness which permeates
the consciousness in the wet cold,
suffering perseverance
which tastes as sweet as
the soft forgotten scent of the rose.
To come out of nothingness
out of the abyss of time and no time,
to come out of that and to taste
the sweet taste of the oxygen in the air for a moment,
for a simple brief instant, would you not endure,
would you not say "No problem, Lord"
to the pain and cold
dampness of this day,
to the problems and the worries and the fact
that this coat doesn't quite cover and
let's the cold in until it
hurts the limbs when they try to move.
What do you say?
What can you say, but
thank you,
thank you for this day!

Atoms

So I sat down to write the epic poem.
Why not? There's no reason.
There's no reason in the universe.
Yes, sit down my friend,
my good friend.
You look as if you are going to make the atoms themselves
change.
Have a seat,
There is no hurry.
Make your visit.
Have a seat now.
What is your hurry?
Are you trying to get to the future? Well, I will tell you the
future, so
have a seat,
and we shall not speak of the Greeks for they are dead and
we shall not speak of the impressionist painters for they are
dead and,
no, I will not meet you upon this matter lightly
for it is hard to leave them all behind but,
you see, this is a legal matter, the stars,
there are laws, you see,
that say
that time
will go on
and the sun and
the galaxy and the universe will
burn out, and
collapse and
end up
in a

dried
up
ball of
nothing
but
atoms and
the works of
the
Greeks, and
the
impressionist painters will
be
in that ball somewhere with
a strand
of my lovers hair.
So,
that's it. Isn't it? So I cannot write that epic poem and
I will drink, instead, of the wine and
worship the
moment and watch my lover wash
her hair.
In the morning I shall walk in the field and gather flowers
for her table. Tonight,
yes, tonight we shall look at the stars and
wonder.

What Shall I Wear

I checked my closet today.
Will I wear my feelings on my sleeve,
Will it be my waistcoat of sadness
with the hopeless cape of yesterday?
I would wear instead a shirt of love
with a coat of pure kindness
and shoes of a good journey
and gloves of giving.
I look into a grey sky
and ask for help
with my wardrobe.

Fitting Into the Mold

What's the use, he says.
What's the point?
Who says there
has to be a point?
A point on which to get stuck?
Wasting your life is an alternative to
driving yourself into
cramped molds,
bread molds,
medicine molds,
molds which paychecks fit into,
molds which success fits into.
I have been hammered into these molds
by the pressure of the years. I lie like putty
in every intended and required shape
yet,
I still
I find this poem lying
gracefully along
the red mahogany
table.

Momentary Specks

Not so clever after all,
It's just me,
nobody important,
just me,
This ant in your collar,
this speck in your journal.
Look.
You can see,
dancing across your screen,
just a momentary sparkle,
in your own little
universe.
Did we really exist
or were we just momentary specks?
Sirens call.

Grass

Water flows over rocks,
bubbles from stone to stone.
There is no stopping it as it flows slowly past me like the
winds.
Yes, the winds whisper,
whisper softly
for me and the grasses sway for me
They are calling to you.
This war,
this war,
this war!
Can you hear them calling?
These grasses they grow.
They grow silently swaying over our heroes.
This war,
this war,
this war!
This poem,
this poem,
this poem!
Brushes of color!
Can you see them?
Can you hear the grasses swaying for you?
Can you?

Loneliness

Poem about being left alone,
poem of love,
poem of loneliness,
A poem in the night
to hold back the beast
just a little bit,
a little silence in words.
Oh paint me a picture of the wind in the trees.
Oh sing me a song with clapping of hands.
Oh carry me home with a chorus of
love
and remember the lost one in the night
writing poems
alone.

Poetry for Peace

Yeah, I'm there, man,
like a peach or a flower,
or a rock in the street,
picked up
by a child and hurled at a tank
while we visit the Hitler channel and
brag about our cluster bombs
and speak of freedom.
Whose flag?
Whose flag
shall we drape over the child?
Yours?
Mine?
And so this rock in the street, this
peach or a flower
bounces off the tank and
falls again helpless in the street,
as helpless as this poem
as helpless as the peach or the flower or the child.
We can do this.
We can write this poem.
We can read it
for peace, for
children and mothers everywhere.
Sing and rejoice for life
this day,
this day
and tomorrow.
poetry for peace
poetry for peace

These Moments

These moments lead to other slow,
oh so slow moments leading to endless
eternities.

If the universe exploded once
it will explode again leaving us with
questions,
floating over the horizon like
simple dew drops,
waiting for the hot summer sun to leave them
seemingly
gone,
seemingly vanished into the noontime
of a hot day.

House Ghost

Gogglelagoshee

I am the house ghost tonight,
making the floors cry out
softly as I try my words out
on my half lit house.
Tonight this restless soul
wanders the halls,
listens at doorways
for God
or someone like God.
Love waits
in some of the rooms.
Pain waits in others
and the ghost asks little
of either,
only a taste to say
I was
here.

The Wind, The River and the Creek

Shall I say I have drifted in silence
with the leaves on this creek

or

I have lain in quiet solitude
with these bleached logs?

Shall I say I am the wind
and have seen the river
into which the creek flows,
and the sea?

No,
simply this
and only this:

bottomland corn,
a creek
and a young man throwing rocks
at leaves.

Looking at the Ceiling

Texture.

A textured ceiling
with the shadows intact
like the moment of
the mason,
the
craft,
the
art,
the moment of
submission,
that moment.

The textures demand it,
they demand it.

They demand the painting,
the undefined expression of
what?

Only the moment
suspended in
what?

A suspension bridge to
truth,
to
you.

What Did It Matter

And what did it matter
after my last poem was read,
after the last painting,
painted in red,
and what did it matter
after the last bet was lost,
lost in the roll of the dice,
lost in God's conquest or
man's wisdom or
folly,
lost as surely as the
fundamental target is
lost,
lost as surely as the last
child of war is
lost,
lost as you,
or
I.

Trusting the Breeze

When the breeze settles upon the
buildings
like the cat settles into
the empty box or
basket,
when the dust settles
after floating in the air
or appearing
in the shaft of light
from the window,
when suddenly the odor
of ozone in the air before the
storm
settles into the corners of
the afternoon,
then, and only then,
will I turn the page.

King George Always Likes a Spot of Tea

There are no favorites.
There is no victory,
only gladness that I have no
child
to sacrifice
to the masses,
calling themselves this or
that,
the masses,
of which
I am one,
tumbling
without
control to
eternity,
with only this,
merely a comma in the dialog,
a simple request,
let's have a spot of tea with our war.
King George always likes a spot
of
tea.

Ultimate Game of Cards

The wind in the willows
whispers,
waits not for this poet whose
words are frozen,
and yet as restless
as the limbs which sway
carelessly like
youth which is
lost,
squandered in the ultimate
game of cards.
Aces and eights,
the dead man's hand.
We are all holding aces and eights
and the wind in the willows
cannot help us.
I deal
a joker here
a queen there.
I am a lonely deuce who
cannot sleep so I listen to the wind
in vain waiting for the
whisper.

Until Then

When reason rules the world
there will be no flimsy excuses
for war.

When love rules the world
there will be no
children crying.

When there is hope again
then our votes will count again,
but not until then may we rest,
not until then may we be silent,
may we be content
to let lies be counted as truth,
to let the children of war
lie broken and
bleeding
without pointing to say
look!

Waiting

Waiting for
nine o'clock,
fifty five years,
Godot,
waiting for
morning,
Saturday,
for
candy,
ice cream,
a woman,
a man,
waiting for
sunrise,
sunsets,
a doctor,
lawyer,
(the engineer is on time)
waiting for
truth,
justice
and the American way
and hoping
that it will all turn out
okay.

Sweet Survivor

So sweet to see no tube
in her nose,
no oxygen in use,
no catheter.
So sweet to see
three meals today
and water being drunk
with the words
I love water.
Yesterday she babbled without words.
Today she babbles
with words
and rhymes
playfully
but answers questions.
What's your name?
Moon Rock.
So sweet to
hear my name,
Little Man.

Bottles in the Sea

Oh one who passes messages by bottles in the sea!
Can you see me?
Can you hear me?
Oh one who passes dreams across the winds!
Can you see me?
Can you hear me?
Maybe yes in the morning and no in the
afternoon and maybe tonight we will
ride the wind.
These are bottles in the sea,
sealed by small hands of children,
too young or too old to
struggle with answers
or questions.
May we all still be young enough
to roll our message
into the bottle.
May we
all be careful with the sealing.
May we
have enough faith
to throw it
with all our might.

Winter

Winter and the trees have no leaves!
Beauty is the stolen moment
of a single green field among
the gray of the trees.
Beauty is the sudden reddish brown
of the grasses
and the clear view
of the fields through the dark trees,
the daring of the hawk as he
somehow avoids
the barren branches and
soars through the woods.
Beauty is the single glimpse
of a deer family
in the
winter.

Web Published Poets

Hail to you
sentient ones,
keepers of the morning dew,
masters of the web so
recently spun!
Hail to you
who dare submit,
who dare feel and tell.
Hail to you charmers,
singers, jokers,
lucky ones, who
know the morning dew,
for the sunrise comes
and the sunset goes.
So wail, cry,
rant, try.
Each day is not an
entitlement,
only the gift of
old
and young
and hope,
hope for a stricken child,
hope for a grandmother,
hope for a prisoner,
for we are all prisoners,
and hope
that says, indeed, there is
a new law of God's physics.
All that matters cannot be destroyed.

Untitled

He speaks it plainly
like simple cotton cloth,
like grain,
simple grain in the field.
He says it purely,
not bundled,
not cooked,
raw.
He says it plainly
like the wind,
not the metaphor of the wind but
the
wind itself,
making noise in the
trees.

The Soldier's Poem

I reach inside and I twist
my heart out of my chest and I
hold it in my hands.
It is beating for you
Rumba rumba baby baby,
rumba rumba.
Can you hear my heart?
I can feel it beating for those children of war
who did nothing
to earn
a look at the blood in the street,
who did nothing
to learn
of the sound of gunfire in the night.
Rumba rumba baby baby,
rumba rumba
for the soldiers who said, "I'll go!",
and went
and found not what they were seeking,
only the
gunfire in the street
and the children.

Great Uncle Webb

My great uncle Webb
never wrote a poem, I
could hide my finger
in his wrinkles and
he had giant floppy ears
and loved the Yankees. He said
they couldn't lose with
Maris and Mantle.
My great uncle Webb lived
with his sister, and worked in a laundry.
He pressed clothes.
I remember the machine and the steam.
My great uncle Webb drove
the same car for twenty years and,
when he died, we all wanted it and
it was in perfect condition.
My great uncle Webb never married.
He drove slowly
in the middle of the road and
settled at night
into his special chair.
My great uncle Webb
never
wrote a poem.
He had that in common
with God.
I bet they're watching' the Yankees
right
now.

Fires of War

To heal,
I want to say that
I am sorry
but
it is not enough to be sorry.
It is not enough to cry.
It is not enough to get even
or even to try to turn the other cheek.
The refugees gather at the border.
“Their lives matter too.”
It is enough to become quiet
in the silence of the crowd.
It is enough to honor with silence
the dead and the living.
It is enough to love again
and to feed the hungry ones
in silence.
We cannot heal with revenge.
We must heal this wound
in our hearts.
We bleed in silence.
Our tears fall into the rubble
but the fires still burn.

The Weeping Grows

The weeping grows.
The child lost!
The child within lost,
unremembered,
fallen,
fallen like the snow quietly at night.
With the last neon of the day
the last motor sound in the night beckons.
Follow me. Follow me to the silence
to the silence of the lost child within,
lost to the last drunk who fails,
to the last conqueror who fails,
to the last breath which fails.
Follow me to reason
for are we not all at least
reasonable?
The last insanity, of course, is reason
in an unreasonable situation.
It is the situation
which beckons without reason.
There is no reason in the death of the child.
There is no reason in the universe.
We can't blame the shark for eating the seal
and yet we expect our fellow man to
not eat us as he grabs for every bit
of amoeba like food.
Don't get in his way.
Don't get in my way.
I am you!

The Cure for Cancer

(My dad died of Leukemia in 1960. I was 12 years old.)

THE NEWS

they say that a pill
could cure my dad

40 years

too

late

and I cry

tears

of

joy,

true

joy.

Rejoice!

Tell Me Why

The branches grow here
and the seeds fall to the earth and
the wind blows across the land
and the rain falls everywhere
and makes the seeds

Grow.

Tell me why the branches grow
and why the seeds fall.

Tell me why the wind blows across the land.
and why the rain falls everywhere
and why the seeds grow.

“Ha”, I say!

I, foolish one, knave, a gnome in the kings land,
“Ha”, I say to the riddles my mind makes for me,
to the why’s without answers.

“Ha”, I say,
this night of wind and moonlight.

Sugar Camp Hollow

We were raised in Sugar Camp Hollow
on Passenger Creek
where the Rebel soldiers camped, it is said
and the Confederate gold is buried there
or so the story goes
and I knew you there
and you and I both knew
to leave those grounds
where the small creek meets Passenger.
We both knew to leave
those grounds
before dark.
You and I
shared the secrets of Sugar Camp Hollow,
them Rebs,
that gold.
The neighbor Simpson
told the tale,
his skinny fingers
waving, pointing to that
spot where the springs
flow to create that small creek,
that place where dreams are formed.
A poem for you tonight,
Sugar Camp Hollow,
Passenger Creek,
them Rebs, that gold,
and I pause beside this spring of remembrance.
This moment is a thin stream of water
flowing from a tiny spring
somewhere.

To Walt Whitman

There is indeed a stalker in my dream.
He waits among the broccoli sprouts,
waiting for me to pass as an ant today.
Today I shall be the smallest ant in the field.
I shall carry the pieces of leaves toward
pyramids.
I shall ride in your collar and wonder at your life.
I shall wonder at the cashier, the driver, the toll
gate worker. So many strangers!
You'd think I'd have seen them all by now.
So many like me,
engineer with prints, artist with canvas,
musician with violin of very old wood.
So many to the slaughter, so many like me!
Walt's Wagoner is now the semi-trailer driver,
the same staunch strength, he has not changed.
So many like me!
The press operator stamps parts with earplugs in place.
His grandfather, the blacksmith, is in his hands, in his feet.
They are the same among so many.
This farmer's son has wide feet for the plowed earth,
sits in his cubicle without the need for wide feet.
Writes poems he does, this ant in your collar,
shreds leaves
builds pyramids

She

When she whispers,
like the sound a skirt makes,
the sounds the leaves make,
the sound the wind makes
early, when the birds sing,
like the peaceful sound of the brook.
When she speaks
like the rain itself
on the roof,
it's the sound the sunshine makes
in the yard,
the sound the moonlight makes,
the sound of a kind thought,
the sound the clouds make,
and the sound the sun makes
setting and rising.

Self

So I said to myself,
“Self,
where is this leading
this living,
this being?”
“Where is this leading?”, I asked in a moment
of weakness,
in a moment of pure futility,
maybe the only pure thing I’ve
ever
Known,
as pure and as cold as the
mountain stream this futility.
I have made for me a home in it,
a warm home with a
fire
where I can burn my moments
and watch the smoke rise up from them
to heaven.

Seeds and Weeds

Plant seeds.
That is my only advice.
Plant seeds and let the flowers grow
and pull the weeds yourself,
for yourself.
Till whatever soil you have in this
World.
Grow flowers,
words,
music,
art,
ideas,
science.
Grow anything which is good
and pull the weeds
Yourself!

Questions/Answers

Wonder and bewilderment
are our only clues.
The question is our common friend,
companion,
foe.
Answers are times only
possession.
The sun only appears to rise,
set.
The moon only appears to have
light.
The stars only appear as tiny specks.
All is not true.
We appear to die forever.

Poems

I look at the briefcase with my
brother's poems.
I look at my manuscript
lying on the table,
alone
and I think of other manuscripts
in closets somewhere.
Like faded flowers
in a drawer they contain
an essence of what was there.
Like faded flowers
pressed between the finger and the thumb
they are pressed between memory and
sensation, memory and
hope.
If my fellow man were to say
"Greatness, this is!"
Would that make the paper less
faded?

Oh Sunlight

Oh sunlight!
All the romantic poets are
dead
except for
me.
I will reach into the dew.
I will
because it has been so long,
so long indeed,
so long since we and beauty met truth.

Zinnia

Oh my!
Oh my!
Tonight the night
glides.
Tonight
the poem needs
no
rhyme
and the zinnia, no color,
neither known nor
noticed,
like these
words
dropped so casually
like
petals
in summer.

Why I Am Here

I was created to notice the cat,
catching butterflies.

If I were God

I would be lonely

and I would need

someone

to notice

how the cat catches butterflies

and brings them into the house

and how they are,

to her, as big a prize

as any mole or mouse.

Angst For Peace

It's too late tonight
for the bleeding hearts
or the burning stomachs.
It's too late for the cries
of the hungry,
for the
shit,
to late for the shit,
the shit will have to wait
for the boardrooms tomorrow,
for the business
decisions.
The shit will have to wait for executive decisions
because it's too late
for the shit
tonight.
It's too late for
compromise, for
reason,
but
it's early enough for hope
and
it's early enough to try
anyway.
"Will you try with me?", says Mr. Rogers
"Will you try with me
for peace?"

Idea Of The Week

The dollar lies on the table.
A crumpled George stares
steadfastly at me
as I write my critique
to a poet
who someday may need no critique from
a noone
such as
I .
A crumpled George stares
back.
He looks to be still troubled by those bad teeth
after all these years.
“Ah George, get off my case.”, I say.
I told her the best I could.
You smile the best you can,
don’t you, George?
You smile the best you can.

Histories Are Not My Stories

You read me histories.
Histories that don't exist for me.
I say
I am all there is.
There are no histories but my
history.
There is no story but my
story
and when I die
all
is gone.
When I die there will be no more
Sunday matinee's smell of the theater.
When I die the roses will not bloom.
You can tell each
Other, then,
of your histories and how the
world went on without
me
but you will never
convince
me.

Firefly

Fireflies
we are,
you and I,
a sparkle over there,
here,
now there.
How can we hope for more when
the stars
are
fireflies
too.
These mighty suns
burning in the eternal night
a night which will be there
when stars are
gone,
as gone as the children
of war.
These children deserve more
than those majestic,
meaningless
stars.
The children of war deserve more
than some unknown poet
can give them.
I am the same as them.
You are the same as them,
greater than mere stars,
galaxies.
What galaxy can equal one
child?

Driving Pain

I drive the streets in the rain and
wonder if the neck will hurt if
I write tonight.
Pain is as necessary as the rain,
as anger,
as sorrow,
as joy.
I bare my mammal lips back over my mammal
teeth and bear it like the last wolverine
or that final wild grizzly.
I raise upon my haunches and I snarl at
the approaching hunter.
He won't take me easily.

Invisible Peace

What then,
fame or peace?
Which is it?
When the music flows like the sunrise settles
upon the horizon,
like the wind itself
settles upon the
contours of the
windows into
the soul
itself, or
into the poem
of hope itself,
yes, the embodiment of hope within the music,
within the music, the embodiment of the
music, the
soul, the visual,
the
art,
at least
tries,
at least
settles into the trickle
of a small stream
somewhere
making
almost silent
peace.

Songbird

Where shall we go, then,
when all of the options are taken, when
all of the dreams are used up in the morning
of our discontent.
Where shall we go, then,
when we refuse to hope,
(for we have to refuse the eternal hope)
to condemn ourselves to
the hell of no hope.
Shall we turn then,
turn the turn still
and get on the bus to hell?
We shall lie down
in the morning of our discontent
and sleep the sleep again
which brings the new dreams,
for I cannot tell you,
no, I will not tell you of the death of hope.
I will not tell you of the birth of despair.
Though my hands may shrivel
and the sores may ravage me,
I will stand when I cannot stand.
I will sing when I have no voice.
I will laugh when there is only sorrow in front of me
and I will cry only tears of joy when all is gone
I can only hold this pen and write these words for you.
I can do no more.
No words can replace the song of just one
songbird in the morning of our discontent.
So, I say to you,
be that songbird.

Momentary Flicker

The inner soul has to be in there saying
both what's the point
and there has to be a point.
We are in a situation which
seems to
be so temporary,
so momentary.
Our lives seem so like the flicker of a candle.
We stare into a universe where
billions of years
have passed and
will
pass again.
How fleeting we are!
Like fireworks we are!
Red and blue and yellow flashes in the night we
are,
as meaningless to the ages as
a single stone in the river
and, yet,
we still sing and paint and write and act
and hold our face to the wind and hope.
wow!

Summer Breeze

Day lilies
and marigolds can make you
happy.
A lazy afternoon and a fly
mean karma is near.
It is those hot summer days.
Those hot summer days,
are Socrates talking to Plato
in a straw hat,
are Jim and Huck on the river.
Day lilies
and marigolds can make you
happy.
Let there be light
and the summer
breeze!

Beauty Is Truth

Too late for the roses,
too late
for the show,
oh, yes, too many words for the
joker
and no pointy hat,
no multicolored vest for the
clown with his smile painted on,
no free will
except for the
interpretation!
You there,
you with your dreams of
multicolored flowers leading
up to,
leading into
nothing other than
hope,
you can take the measure of your dreams
in beauty itself
and hold your head
up
high.

No Red

Used up all the paint,
no red,
damn!
Can't paint,
no red,
no rose, no
apples, no
red limousines
running through the night taking
queens to kings,
no red for the joker's cap,
no red for her lips
(She might as well be dead.),
no red,
and the yellow's running low,
for the sunrise,
for the little lady's hat,
so little time, so little yellow
and no
red.

Selfishness is Essential in Spring

Selfishness is essential in spring,
as essential as giving,
or love,
and necessary for both.
It is selfish to sit on the deck and
feel the spring air on my face and
do
nothing.
What is it that I am doing?
What is it that I want?
Is it the words which will throw themselves
across the horizon, like those northern lights,
and lead you to me.
You too are fragile and
you too will surely break like the ice above the doorway
when spring
hits you in the face,
hits you with a lily in the yard or
plowed earth,
hits you just when you thought you were dead like the
barren winter land
and you find yourself with seeds in your palm
and plans.

Where Mozart Is Buried

Nobody knows where
Mozart is buried,
as if planned
for us to learn.
Nobody knows where
Mozart is buried,
as if arranged like
flowers
fading in a vase.
He is buried here, I say ,
in my heart.
Mozart is buried in these woods,
among these trees
beside the river.
He's buried with my brother, the
Poet.
He's buried with my father,
in the look he gave me
before he died.
Nobody knows where
Mozart is buried,
as if planned,
arranged like
flowers in a vase,
like
the first sprouts in a
garden.

The Spring Blossoms

The spring blossoms
promise everything.
They deny the knowledge of fall,
of winter,
they are innocent in the soft breezes.
Like a child the spring blossoms sway
and await the nest.
I am glad to see my friends.
I am glad to have made it through another
winter of
drab hungry sadness to
meet with the blossoms, to
breathe again the scent,
of spring
in a world which has no sense to
offer, no wealth of reason
except for my friend, the bumblebee.
We have common friends, he and I.
Together we will visit them
gathering fragrance
and food.

Rosa Parks

I Wish I Knew Rosa
I wish I knew Rosa, but what would I tell her?
That I stood up in the back of the bus,
or that I sat down in the front with her.
Quietly in my corner, I wonder.
Don't start a fuss Rosa.
Are you crazy?
What are you thinking'?'
They won't hang you?
They'd hang you, dear Rosa.
So run, don't expect that seat.
Run for your own good,
for your family, run
but I am the coward.
So we are left with that my dear sweet lady, who,
more than the speeches,
more than the names in
history books, the lady who
sat in the front
and did not
run.

Depression Poem

His elbow rests on his knee and his chin is in
the palm of his hand.
He fights off the urge for another drink or
another smoke or
another anything else that might
pretend to ease
that craving, that
sense of waiting.
He wipes his forehead with his palm and wishes the
answers were there
but they are not there or anywhere.
Hemingway took the cowards way out
leaving me here to state it plainly.
Life has no answers for you, pal.
We are not here
for answers.

Okay I'll Write More Poems

Okay I'll write more
and take the time to cry more.
It takes time to cry.
You have to make time, to stop,
because
doing, doing, doing,
that is what
we are told
is the way to be.
I'm writing a poem.
Never write a poem about writing a poem.
That is what we teach
and that is what I've done.
So never mind!
Never mind as the walls
crash, as the walls crumble,
crumble as surely as the tanks fire at them,
and as surely as babies die.
Yessireee
Don't ever write a poem
about writing poems
and that is what I've done
so
never mind.

On the Need to Write and the Reaper

I need to remember to
write a poem before
the reaper takes me,
takes me,
takes me like he took all the others.
Those
fallen down pieces of
granite represent people just like
us,
fallen and unremembered by
everybody,
like my father.
There are many now
who don't remember my
father but who
may remember me
and may someday read these
scribblings which
a nobody moron
loser like me
at least took the time to
write.
So write.
Leave scribblings on the walls
of your cave.

Ten Second Poem

Befits me I guess this
serving of poems in the night.
You read the poem and leave me
silently.
I put my name on it but you do not remember me
tomorrow.
My fifteen minutes is ten seconds of your time,
ten seconds of hers, of his.
I have ten seconds, ten seconds.
My father, my father,
oh how his eyes did shine!

Criticism

The criticism struck
into him like a butter knife
slides
through butter.
He was butter itself
in the other man's hands
so he looked out the window
and watched the blackbirds
weaving a tapestry in the sky.
They chased a hawk on the winds,
swooping to bite at his body
as he tried to elude them.
"Caw Caw Caw", they cried.
"Caw Caw Caw"
His eyes returned to find more criticism
in the look on the man's face.
The hawk flew steadfastly
and tried no more to evade.
The crows picked and picked until,
finally, the hawk
slowly
faded into the sky
and the crows returned to wait.
More criticism struck home this time.
"Do you understand me, Mister?"
"Yes
I believe
I
do"

The Fire

The fire is not out.
It burns like fire, like pain, like, you know, pain?
Water waiter, water for my fire, water, sweet clear cool
water!
Words won't do. Words or work won't do.
The sword sinks deeply into the underbelly, into the abyss
and the words find no favor.
Eat the peach, man, eat the peach, yes, dare, next time, next
time, next time!
Is there time left?
Time between growing up and growing old.
Time between the river and the sea.
Eat the peach, man,
eat the peach.
It is good,
it is sweet

Cloud

You can be sure of one thing.
I won't tell you,
I won't tell you to think about it.
I want you to imagine
that you're on a cloud. And you're lying there on
that soft, soft cloud,
And you're lookin' up at th' other clouds and
you're makin' out
locomotion
and trains and planes and Indians.
As you're lying there on that cloud,
you don't ask,
"how is it that I can lie on this cloud?"
no, you just lean back and look at the sky,
An' you grab you a little piece of cloud and
you fluff it into the air and it disappears and
somehow
HOW is not so important,
nor WHERE, nor WHAT, nor WHEN.
That little piece of cloud over there,
I do believe, yes,
I think I see!
That's what it is!
I can see the top of my feet
sticking out of the cloud below me
and hanging in mid-air
because in our dreams we don't need
gravity,
you see,
yes, in our dreams we can fly like
a bird in the sky.

Bozo

I'm Positive About This So Therefore It's Positive Thinking

Nobody reads poems, pal,
books neither.
Nobody is going to read this crappola, buddy.
Why don't you just open a gas station
or get a good factory job?
They pay fourteen an hour at Western Polycom.
Nobody looks at art, Bozo.
Why are you wasting your life on that?
How much did you spend on all this canvas and
paint.
You need shoes.
Can you wear these paintings.
Nobody cares,
only assholes like you,
you stupid bonehead.
Who gives a damn what T.S. Eliot said.
When you boil it down it comes out to a big "beats
the shit out of me" anyway,
so why even say it, I mean, why not just chase some
tail, instead.
Ya know?

Care

No I don't care if you like this poem, no
I don't care.

I care if the cat is fed, if
the mortgage company is fed, if
that car lasts another year, if
the DOW goes up.

Karma can be found among
the waters and the leaves and
the car lasting another year.

Karma can be found while looking for your keys,
asking the waitress for another cup.

No I don't care that you may think this poem runs
into
heaven, runs into
hell
or runs
out
of
words.

It Is the Wind in the Trees

It is the wind in the trees which
is only seen by the effect
and, yet, we know the wind is there.
It is the breeze which rustles the leaves that
gives me hope.
It is that I cannot see it
and yet I know it is there that
gives me hope.
It is the vastness of space itself
and infinity itself that
gives me hope as I
hold this finite brush
in my temporary hand and I make this finite stroke
with
this temporary
paint and the wind
is in the trees
giving hope.

Autumn Trees

The trees are turning red and orange
on their own,
without my help, except
to notice,
but that's why we are here,
to notice,
to say that flower is pretty, God
but that one over there
is plain.

The trees are red
and yellow,
red
and yellow
and green against a sky
of blue.

Storm

There I wuz,
tryin' to make music but
the sky wouldn't shut up,
rumblin' and ravin' to beat all.
Well I yelled back I did.
"Shut up!" I said.
"can't you see I'm a tryin' to make music in here!"
That's when it started talkin' back,
louder and louder like the Battle of Stones River itself.
I yelled again "Back off you ol' storm!"
That's when it started a throwin' that hail at me.
I jumped back and closed that window I did.
That is when I saw it,
my cat a running for high heaven in the driving sleet.
I opened that window again but she was gone, she was
gone and the sleet was piled up against the side of the
house
like snow.
The storm she rumbled low like bass drums with
bombs a going off on the horizon
and the sleet was hitting the window like static on
an old radio.
It always makes me feel charged like the lightning itself
when it blusters like that.
It's like God almighty himself has allowed himself a
few moments
to just be angry and
be proud of it!
I just hope he doesn't accidentally hurt my cat.

We Must Meet

Here you shall find me,
must find me,
We must meet,
having met, we must
meet again in the shadows of
truth.
Beauty shines through the window and
dances with the dust in the air.
The cat sits by the window
watching the birds.
I sit by the window with your memory,
watching for you
in the birds,
in the trees.
We must meet across the river
in the shade of that tree,
that tree we cling to.

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David Michael Jackson created Artvilla.com in 1997 to publish poetry, art and music.

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