



GET YOUR OWN DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR!

(THESE ARE MINE).

by

David M. Schwartz

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A Pickle for Bernice

Hey! I Just Write This Stuff

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Lease Loved Poems By A Relative Unknown Who's Probably Not Your Relative

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Autumn Falls Hard October 20, 2008

As I wake up for the 3rd time in the middle of early morning,
I pull up the covers and wrestle them for warmth. I relent.
Down they go, I stumble toward the window, shutting it for the season.
Looking outside, the ground is wet with dew.

After an hour's sleep, I get up late at 4:30 in the morning,
say prayers, make it out the door.
I wipe the dew from the car,
the defroster and heater on full blast
to combat the temperature suddenly in the low 40s.

"What happened?" It was a constant 75 in the mornings.
Autumn falls hard
like a ton of bricks,
dragging down the trees
dispersing the leaves like water from a glass.
Splat! Splish! The damp grass and mud go on my shoes.

I see my breath, like a factory smoke stack,
surprising me because it's not December.
On the way to work, it's a marvel of dull color
as lost shuffled leaves land on the wipers. -
They hustle off on their own appointed rounds,
having no use for time or business deadlines.

It's off to work, off to home.
There's no stopping the running,
no more walk through crackling leaves
content with world, satisfied alone.
I wish to sleep in heavy slumber 3 days.
wake refreshed the first time in a long time.
Autumn falls hard. I'm not ready for winter much less life.

It Might As Well Be Broken October 22, 2008

His neck is so tight, twisted,
and he hunches over at work.
At home, he leans backward,
but feels no relief from pain.

No shower nor graceful hands caress him.
He can't even find someone to even shun.
He thinks back upon a first born donkey,
reminds himself how stubborn he can be.
He reminds himself that he's had no redemption,
but his neck was pushed by stress not cracked by axe.

His parents cast him out
but he denies how badly he feels forsaken.
His face is contorted as his spine, so he cries out.
Stifling himself, he can only grimace, trying not to be heard,
not that anyone's listening anyhow.

Occasionally, he reaches out,
though he feels he's turned off everyone he knows.
All he feels is awkward, mocked by the cell phone's light.
Nobody's at home to call, nobody else to look up.
What would he say anyhow, when they haven't responded in years?

Giving into compulsion, he searches for a friendly voice.
His address book is worthless, and he's ready to throw the phone against a wall.
He knows there's nobody to reach, or who wants to hear him complain.
He might as well stop calling.

What good is the phone, if he can't use it to call friends,
when ultimately everybody's unavailable.
But then, when was he fully present for them?
Like his own neck, it might as well be broken.

Black Bean Blues October 24, 2008

I got those black bean blues.

I got those mean old black bean blues.

I don't like limas, pinto beans won't do.

So tired of kidneys and garbanzos,
when I'm cooking up chili or stew.

Do you know?

Do you know just how I feel?

When you want to something special to mix with corn and onion,
that special taste to thrill?

I get inspired to cook, but it won't take much to eat.

I get inspired to cook, but find it all too easy to eat.

We all want something spicy, but I avoid all sorts of meat.

Can't you hear me? Can't you hear me when I sing?

Can't you tell what I've been seeking?

A little love in a bowl, pan, or your arms,
or anything else you want to bring.

I've got no idea sometimes.

I've really got no clue at all.

I've got no idea what would possess me
to write about black bean chili this fall,
but I want to go get some anyway.

There's A Hair In My Plate November 6, 2008

There's a hair in my plate,
and I must confess my distaste for hirsute salad.
Why would it fall here, when I'm with my dear?
Who would care to foil my night, perhaps on a dare?
Aren't we a cute pair as she feeds me her soup?

Unfortunately, I can't stop this rant as the waiter approaches?
Is everything all right? Surely he jests, though we can't prove it was his curl.
Maybe a hostess' wig or a really bad weave from the maitre'd.
How I wish I never did see that hair,
ruining my evening as everyone did stare
after I dropped it on the floor, walking out the door.
Don't worry. No more!

Rainy Walk Blues November 6, 2008

I got holes in my shoes,
and I've got so far to go.
I've got only one pair of shoes.
Now I've got so far to go.
Glad for my legs and feet,
and I'm glad there's no ice or snow.

It's early November,
but the wind howls and it blows.
It's only November,
that wind howls and it moans.
Been walking for 8 hours,
and I'm numb down to my toes.

The skies are getting darker.
My hair is getting wet.
Those heavy skies are getting darker,
they'll be much darker yet.
Well I'm headin' into nightfall.
there's no shelter I can get.

I've been waitin' to see my family
and bread nor drink I've had none.
I've been waitin' to see my family,
and bread nor drink I've had none.
Nobody I have harmed, yet people always have me on the run.

The rain is really pouring, the lights are blurred ahead.
The rain is really pouring, and the city lights are blurred ahead.
No cars stop to help me, as the rain beats on my bare head.

I sing to myself, will there be no pity for a poor man?
I ask up above, will there be no pity or redemption for this poor man?
Guess I've been made to walk all alone in the rain.
It's up to me to figure out my punishment, though I don't understand any plan.

The lights are no closer, and all hope is gone.
The city lights are no closer, as cold rain falls all hope is gone.
I must trudge, talking to myself to stay awake.
I can never catch a break, even though it's close dawn.

Hat Hunting November 8, 2008, For CSD

I remember you on my fashion make-over,
picking out summer shirts and slacks.
We laughed at what didn't match so well,
and at my new look, fashion plate that I am.

Now I need you again 8 years later
to keep me out of trouble.

I don't want to look like a goober.

As you may imagine, I've been through
black beret, cowboy hat, porkpie, knit ski hat, and ball cap.

While my mother thought I should get something with ear flaps.

Moms know best. I guess. They also know how to keep their sons from dating potential.

I thought of you shopping with me. I thought of Elmer Fudd's hat.

That's right. Yet, that's so very wrong.

Still, I picture you with me, a few weeks before Thanksgiving,
scavenging the mall for THE LOOK,
that will not scare women, children, or even terrorists.

I have no idea what I'll buy,

and feel like a 4 year old in hooded coat with mittens.

All I am missing is red boots, scarf, and Peanuts lunch box.

But I thought of you and somehow, your voice will keep me from goober-hood.

Why Can't I Burp? November 15th, 2008

I am not a prophet,

yet I do speak from the deep shared primordial recesses
of overindulgence and gluttony of feasts and indigestion,
not so much of frankincense and myrrh.

Oh, to share respite and repast
with friends and their children
sharing open secrets or mystical thought.

Oh, to have that one extra helping of stew
or ginger-marinated greenbeans or lentils.

No, I have not quite relaxed tongue nor tummy
with water nor wine after the last bite.

Brownies are presented to me. MMmm..... brownies.

Who am I to refuse as I throw more on the heap in my gullet?

Has it really been an hour of eating or ten minutes of resting thereafter?

Have I fallen into a deep food coma so suddenly
that I would not notice being dragged from table to door,
door to curb, curb to dumpster?

Ah, but I do notice as I furtively loosen the button
underneath the distressed belt.

Throbbing. Pounding. My stomach and chest won't let go.

Stretching. Tightening. Something's gone so very wrong yet again. No.

So I speak from experience as if a plaintive collective plea, if not a prayer.
Yet I cannot promise not to overeat,
not remembering the last time I made such a promise.
Heavenward I look, past my hosts' faces, past the window.

Why, oh Why, can't I simply burp? Ahhh.

What Not To Say On A First Date November 17, 2008

I thought I smelled grouper,
I guess that's my own socks and shoes.
That's right, Baby, when I get the blues,
I realize that I may not be much of a thinker,
but you make me want to be a better drinker.

Support myself? Surely you jest!
I have your inheritance or your daddy's business.
Either will be fine.
Let me handle the rest.

Who picked out your outfit?
It's so very wild.
What's with those brown and grey spots?
Have you been taking care of a small child?

I'm not one for pets,
but I do surely see that your dog would make a good foot stool
or an end-table occasionally.

I may not exercise much,
but I still like the sun.
If you want me to go hiking,
you start out and I'll follow with my gun.

Do you think me a perv or maybe a creep,
If I say that I accept you,
Though you don't seem too deep?
If I say shopping isn't my thing,
it doesn't mean that I will or won't give you a ring.

So your ex is a cop, what's it to me?
I've never sought jail bait, nor restraining order did I see.
I may make you nervous. You may start to sweat,
but when it comes to me what you see is what you get.

Like A Wild Beast In A Forest November 19, 2008

He's rambling, wide-eyed, panting.
He scurries. Stops. Shuffles.
Ducking and hiding, he seems to eye his prey.
He breathes heavy, snorts whenever he moves.
Some think he is a deformed miscreant cast off.
Some would call him a dirty old man in a trench coat.

The rain falls and only spreads mud on him.
It can never clean him.
No sin nor stench can ever be removed.

If you see him, avert your eyes.
You might be sucked in, locked in his gaze.
Then he may nab you and choke you,
or just bite your throat for the fun of it.

Nobody knows where he's from.
Not even the police want to catch him,
and criminals slink out of his path. They are not competition.

Only he knows the secret that will transform him
as he seems to prowl the streets.
From his view, he is the fox, not the hound.
But he can barely gasp, as much as he wants to testify against the world.

Time would stop in an instant,
people would freeze and seek forgiveness.
It's too late for pardons.
All he ever wanted was love,
and in the immediate future sleep and some cold medicine
that he might feel his normal self.

The Dreidel Blues November 23, 2008 (If Ray Charles were Jewish, he'd sound something like this...)

Well, I got me a little dreidel,
that I made out of clay
When it's dry and ready,
then dreidel I will play.

I'm talkin' about dreidel!
Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel.
We're gonna spin it in the evening
and all the ever-lovin' day.

Have you seen, have you seen,
have you seen it's lovely body?
It's got legs so short and thin.
They're so short that you can't see them
but I bet when it's gonna drop I will win.

I'm talkin' about dreidel!
Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel.
I'm gonna spin it in the evening
and all the ever-lovin' day.

Don't you know, don't you know
don't you know it's always playful?
It loves to dance and spin, spin, spin.
Lets' start a game of dreidel,
and I bet ou that I will win.

It may full on Nun, it may fall on Hay.
But if it falls on Gimel, you know that I will win.
I'm talking dreidel, dreidel, dreidel.
We're gonna spin it in the evening
and all the ever-lovin' day.
You know we're gonna spin it!
Dreidel, dreidel, dreidel...
Come on now let's play.

One Early November Sunday Morning November 23, 2008

It's forty-five years and a day since JFK's been dead
World changed a dozen times over.
I think of service to self and country
and a resurgence of ideals.

I'm just trying to make it
best as I can, remembering when honest work
and my vote meant something.
I remember when the government and police were my friends,
when I could ride my bike unafraid of being snatched.
It's been so long ago in my same neighborhood.

There's frost on my window at 6 Am.
The light rail train flies over like a comet,
and I wish I could wish on it like a falling star
for success and dreams unrealized.

Back in the day, a computer would control a rocket
and blow the world wide apart.
Now I support the great deity Internet,
rather just helping people to live and die a little better.

We'd meet one another's needs - neighbor to neighbor.
My eyes mist a little from the cold wind and the loss of 16 of my 41 years.
I will get them back somehow some day.
I will ask what I can do for myself and for others.
Not having lost the vision to make Camelot a little more real
and future at least a little alright so I can sleep at night.

The moon and stars are still out
on my early morning ride to work,
there's still potential unfulfilled.
Lonely cars shoot past, and I turn off the radio
savoring silence, thankful for my senses
for being another working stiff in a white collar enclave.

Star bright and highway light out
first star I see this morning.
I wish I may I wish I might
get through the day with a little less fright.

As I stop for coffee and chat up the gas station cashier,
I wonder what became of the world.
I laugh to myself at the smiling face on the plastic bag she hands me.
It reminds me of innocence and folk songs,
and deep in my heart I still wonder how much I can believe
if we shall overcome some day?

Rotting Vegetation Blues November 23, 2008

Well I was hitching down the road,
I spied a truck of rotting vegetation.
I was just hitching down the road,
and spied a truck of rotting vegetation.
Wherever it was going, I was happy to make my destination.

I got some rest, laying against some melons and greens.
I took me some rest against those melons and greens.
A cop pulled the driver over, and he was looking mean.

I heard him ask "What's your business 'round here?"
I heard him ask "What's your business 'round here?"
The driver was honest, but the cop said "It ain't so clear."

"If you don't mind, you're going to follow me downtown."
"If you don't mind, you'll just follow me downtown."
We'll examine your truck, no use in playin' the clown."

I had no chance to jump off,
with flashing red in front and behind.
No, I had no chance to jump off, with flashing red in front and behind.
I knew they'd take me in, who'd go my bail didn't cross my mind.

We got to the station, and I laid low awhile.
We got to the station, I had to lay low awhile.
The driver didn't see me, though he took me twenty miles.

I've never caused shame to my family, don't expect to now.
I've never caused shame to my family, don't expect to now.
As I saw the detective coming, I hid behind a cow.

I'd rather drink bottled water,
and sleep in a big brass bed.
I'd rather drink bottled water,
and sleep in a big brass bed.
Than seek some adventure with bad tomatoes,
having to play dead.

If you're ever in St. Louis,
be careful of the truck you hop on.
If you're ever in St. Louis,
be careful of the truck you hop on.
You might get dumped into a compactor,
and find your ride gone.

Well, I escaped barely, pretending to milk the cow.
I escaped barely, pretending to milk the cow.
The cops didn't notice, neither did the sow.

If you don't believe my story,
it's just fine with me.

If you don't believe my story,
it's just fine with me.

Because all this while I've hitched with you,
all the way to Tennessee.

Happy Thanksgiving Song November 26, 2008

Chest hairs warmed over an electric fire,
Puppies nipping at my nose,
Internal voices telling me that I'm a liar.
And co-workers criticizing my clothes.

Everybody knows the aspirin and fifth of bourbon,
Help to make one's head bleary.
Tater tots with their skins golden brown,
I will find it hard to not to be teary.

I know more seasonal affective disorder's on it's way;
To add more obsessions to my day.
And my pharmacist is going to spy,
Four different psychotropics I should try. Why oh why?.

And so I'm observing I've been blessed ,
Though I feel closer to 12 than 42,
I've got faith and family, health and my future's not entirely messed ,
By the way, Happy Thanksgiving to you.

Public Service Announcement 122 (Abstinence) December 2nd, 2008

Note: I remember the School House Rock and After School Specials on television as a child. I thought it would be fun to combine my love of pop culture, folk music, and a little scandal like adultery or small-town gossip. Imagine a bar where cartoons were played as commercials, this one being about preventing sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy through abstinence. I thought they'd be seen by teenagers in health class, both possibilities in Appalachia. I can't say they'd have an impact whatsoever, but I had fun with the word play and writing this down. This piece practically wrote itself. It's dedicated to certain friends who know how when they need a good laugh, and the Hazelwood, MO Starbucks baristas. Believe it or not, I am not actually taking a stand on pre-marital hoo-hoo as much as having fun with idioms in American folk music.

My blood-hound finally caught its truck,
but sadly met the train.
I'm left here in the rain at your door,
after picking up my mother-in-law from the pen.
By the way, I apprehended your runaway hen,
but what I've come to ask why won't you see me any more?

Oh, my fair darling, I'm so shy to query,
for each time I've come to wed.
But I was met here by your pappy.
He had other plans instead.
I must ask you from my doctor if it hurts when you pee,
I must ask you as a man if another made you happy.

Here you greet me, hanky at your eye,
I come hat in hand,
no offer of lemonade or to sit in parlor.
All I ask is if you cheated tell me who and why,
I am just trying to understand.
No, I promise I won't break down your door,
but we may end up like Al Capone unless you say more.

My dear, sweet love,
you can plainly know ,
our love is not just birds and bees or made by elves.
How I wished I never kissed your glove,
but now to the doctor we must go.
If you are with child, we must protect and ourselves.

I went from St. Louis to Galax, V-A,
to spare us the talk so to the clinic I went away.
I sought out my series of penicillin shots.
The doctor said we caught it right on the dot.
Will you let me do the right thing if with child you are?
Will you warn your others, or must I find you with them in a car?

I am so very sorry we had our fun,
I should have listened in my youth,
and by your home not tarry.
Be glad I'm not the killing kind, for I have no gun.
Listen now friends one and all to the simple truth
and wait until you marry.
Listen now friends one and all to the simple truth
and wait until you marry.

Grinning December 3, 2008

Flashlights or high beams

signalling the way to latest hot spot from roadside.

Maybe they intertwine, clash, dance, finally meld.

Like the sun shafts through dark grey rain cumulus clouds,

or from behind an eclipse

our eyes draw in that light.

We smile like two year olds pleased with ourselves

for touching our toes or just for meeting, recognizing the other.

It's as if I never smiled before.

Thank you. It's been awhile and I've missed feeling so good.

St. Louis, Missouri December 5, 2008

The brewery's serving breakfast,
while the banjo player's frying eggs,
I've been trying to go vegan, so oatmeal I must beg.
The calories have gotten me, but I'm feeling fine.
I've lost my taste for beer and certainly red wine.
As Charlie tunes his dobro, Suzie butters toast,
On my half-caff coffee, I've already started to coast.
I don't know much of this country or world, stuck here as I may be,
Such is the stuff of my daydreams, in St. Louis, Missouri.

I used to visit nightclubs, how I'd make the rounds.
Now I get to work early, and my ears can't take loud sounds.
It was fun for a few years, and coffeehouses, I did play.
They sold out to developers, or the leases were taken away.
Me, I won't stop dreaming, plucking my guitar.
I don't claim to sing well, and got tired of smoky bars.
I never played for cash despite my schemes,
and if you asked to see all my songs,
My binder's busting at the seams.

Last Saturday night, I saw the crowd from high school.
They were all well-preserved.
Some got married or moved away, none seemed to have crashed and burned.
I'm still living in the same house, but my years have been full.
I don't know much about justice, but we all got what we deserved.
Time's not been the best lover, but I wouldn't trade it for another.
Those faces traded laughs, that I didn't share anyway.
We could drink to the past, to the present or not at all.
When all we share is pleasantries, doesn't matter what we say.

If you see me on the corner,
or maybe at the mall.
Be sure to stop and say hello, I'm not going any place.
Somebody's bound to stick around, I might as well be the one.
The town's big enough to hide in,
and it could be another twenty years before we meet again.
Don't tell me you're any wiser, you look the same.
Even with a little money, we're all playing our own games.
So and so got a girlfriend, Bob's kid is starting to drive.
As for me, I'd love to find someone to share my writing,
just glad to be alive.
If I greet you at the grocery, please don't act surprised.
I'm not one for class reunions, that much I've realized.
We never had that much to share, but keep it polite anyway.
A smile will do the same as words here in St. Louis, Missouri.

Are You Sure? (The Conspiracy Haiku) December 7, 2008

Are you sure your thoughts
are never out to get me?
And the same for mine?

Are you sure money
is no longer in use now
because of the suits?

Is your coffee cup
implanted with a sensor
to control each move?

Turn off computers
Tv radio Ipod
The news and the phone.

Listen to traffic
to others to me to you.
Here the house work now.

Are you sure your thoughts
are yours and not the neighbor's?
Sure you are. Rest easy.

The "Hey Monkey" Chant December 21, 2008

Hey monkey monkey monkey hey hey hey

Hey monkey hey monkey hey hey hey monkey hey hey hey

Monkey monkey monkey hey hey hey monkey hey monkey hey

Hey monkey monkey monkey hey monkey hey!

*Try it on long trips or when visiting the zoo!

Miss Goodsong December 23, 2008

Miss Goodsong lived on the north side of town.

Miss Goodsong lived on the northside of town.

She ran the perfume shop and took the light rail down.

Miss. Goodsong never had any family of her own.

Miss Goodsong never had any family of her own.

She took in a few cats to the store and would throw a mangy dog a bone.

I used to go with my family to that store.

I dreaded going with my family to that store.

It smelled like someone died when you walked through the door.

She would smile at me with a sneaky look in her eye.

She would smile at me with that sneaky look in her eye.

One time she grabbed me and tried to make me eat some pie.

I didn't want any pie, just wanted to go.

I didn't want any pie, just wanted to go.

But I wouldn't mind if it were on fire and the flames did blow.

She tried to hug me and kiss me when she could.

She tried to hug and kiss me when she could.

Miss Goodsong told me that she was lonely but her man was no good.

That lady sprayed that old perfume at my face.

That lady sprayed her old perfume at my face.

She would drop something and lean to show me her corset of lace.

My family did not seem to know they did not seem to heed.

My family did not seem to know they did not seem to heed.

The neighbors were surprised she even had a feeling or a need.

I went back after school one day to tell her I was not interested.

I went back after school one day to tell her I was not interested.

The door was cracked open, and she appeared to be dead.

There was glass all over, perfume on the floor.

There was glass all over, perfume on the floor.

It mingled with the blood that ran to the door.

I could not believe what I saw with a knife in her neck.

I could not believe what I saw with that knife in her neck.

Her clothes were torn round her, and she looked like she was in a wreck.

I turned to call the police on any phone I could find.

I turned to call the police on any phone I could find.

Then she turned to whisper, so faintly and so kind.

Miss Goodsong said she was forty years old.

Miss Goodsong said she was forty years old.

I was 13 and the world it did turn cold.

"Could you give a lady a hand?
Please, could you give a young lady a hand?
Those other young men did not understand.

"I ran this place, but never had any mate.
I ran this place, never had time for a mate.
It was all I could do out of school, I rarely had a date.

You may wonder why I was friendly to you.
You may still wonder why I was friendly to you.
I remember when I was an awkward teenager too.

Now the police are coming my breath is at its end.
Now the police are coming, my breath is at its end.
I hope an angel handsome as you meets me round the bend. "

I asked her who did this, she cried she did not know.
I asked her who did this, she cried she did not know.
They'd been looking through the window since 5 hours ago.

The life dripped out of her, and her hair it did turn brown.
The life dripped out of her, and her blonde hair it did turn brown.
I tried to stop the blood with my shirt, she whimpered not a sound.

The police and ambulance came, told me she was so very weak.
The police and ambulance came, told me she was so very weak.
We all leaned over her, in case she tried to speak.

"Thank you for your kindness, Sirs, thank you for aiding me.
Thank you for your kindness, Sirs, and for aiding me.
I've been alone so long now I felt love finally.

Don't you worry about me, I'm nearly to the other side.
Don't you worry about me, I'm nearly looking from that other side.
You'll find some money to bury me underneath that counter wide."

The medic said "Hush now, we'll do all we can."
The medic said "Hush now, we'll do all we can."
There is no need to hasten any eternal plan."

On the way to the hospital, she slipped away.
On the way to the hospital, she slipped away.
Still I remember her words to this day.

The Lentil Theme December 29, 2008

I'm proud to be a lentil,
providing nourishment to people on the go.
If I were a sentient being, I'd have my own talk show.
I have twenty-six percent protein,
in varieties numbering at least thirteen.

I sustain the masses in India and the Middle East.
Use me in a soup or stew, let me nourish you.
Cook me on the stove top or in a slow cooker.
Just don't pressure cook me, or you will ruin your feast.

Yes, I'm proud to be a lentil,
and the many ways to cook me are nice.
My many nutrients are fundamental
including protein, iron and fiber.
You will have a complete meal if you serve me with rice.

I come in many hues,
and go by many names.
Many nations produce me, I must exclaim.
Canada often exports me, and I am glad to feed you.

A Cynical Self-Assessment December 31, 2008

The factories belch new raisin bran.
while the trucks pepper you with salt.
It's started to rain dogs,
because the cats went on strike.

You drive around hoping for a better day
still you can't see your way to punch a hole through your complacency.
Spin your wheels some more, while waiting for the definition of insanity to change.

People told you to go into writing,
but you had nothing you wanted to share.
They said try stand-up comedy,
but you write poetry and not for the stage.

How long will you stand on the street,
making up silly rhymes?
Will you prophesy to bird seed,
now that all the crows have flown away?
My friend, you have a choice to share your skewed vision
but try to keep it quiet with your cackling maniacal laughter.
The girls don't like that. It's off-putting on job interviews.

Do you still want to be a folk rock hero,
much to the adulation of your bedroom closet door?
Did you ever find groupies, or sensitive hippie chicks to follow you around,
when you weren't following them?

Let me give you one last piece of advice
which I remembered staring at the mirror.
Get your own delusions of grandeur,
these are mine.

Oy....



A Typical Five Minute Span Inside My Brain January 19, 2009

On and on the droning, I tell myself to stop the silliness
No longer creative or genius, the flood is merely irritating.
Exhaustion is all there is as the stampede comes in waves,
almost to my heart-pulsing eardrums crashing.

No medicine, self or doctor prescribed as stopped the laughter,
the doubt, the self-deprecation, but there are no voices
thrusting me out car door or window nor off bridge.

I wonder will they find out that none of this was my choice
from childhood and I do not wish to hear your thoughts nor can I.
There's enough of mine to make me scream aloud.

The tympani and trumpets sound as phrases catch me unawares,
trying to placidly get to work or through morning cereal.
Sleep would be too good for me right now, I may never wish to return to earth.
Drilling holes would not release the demons, only give observation windows as the words gush forth.

"Never more, never more Poe has it in for me.
How the rivers of blood run down my mirror,
I turn again. It's clean.
I am dirty sinful obsequious nothing I do done right.
You never should have bought all you did, you will pay and pay.
Damned to waking no resting hell you can't even let go if you try,
though you preach about relaxing you don't know the first. thing.
Cannibal thoughts, you must stop. I rebuke you.
All the girls stare at you, you fool, past your prime.
You are missing what you mistake as love which is loss
and you've never felt lower, but why bother?
All the guitars in the world, cake, flirting will never quell your mad dash hunt.
You may just defy death to rant from beyond, as if to cast off this vile brain parasite onto unsuspecting
passersby,
finally ridding yourself of eternity.
Even then silence would be too quiet under the ocean of your obsessed torment. You will have to face the
inevitability of all mortality.
Go ahead , scream silently rub your arms and legs to make sure you are still alive. All is not a dream or is it?
Let go let go no you can't defeat the words. Just try. No, you can't let yourself.
Sleep. Sleep. sweet sleep swaddled in womb, bed, grave no difference must sleep."

On top of the litany of chores real or imagined,
and my family's past hurt secrets long told unhealed,
there I find a new wave of nonsense. Stimulus bound, 6 month old me does cry.
Oh to let go and float even in meditation, I know it will return.
I am pushed and pummelled, wondering what eternal sin I suffer to carry this vault of thoughts.

* I was thinking of pretentious song lyrics from the 1960s and early 1970s and my own racing thoughts on a
daily basis. This came out instead.

There's An Island January 29, 2009

There's an island past the sea of tears,
where it's always quiet, safe and warm.
I'd like to take you there with me some time.
The journey's rough but worth the trip.

On my island, the tropical breezes blow
always 80 degrees year around.
The sun and moon shine brightly.
All our needs are met and our way is always lit.

Sleep or read or take a stroll.
You're always welcome to watch the sky unfold.
Watch the waves paint designs in the sand.
Our days are always filled,
and we have no time for pain or sadness.
All our hurts are washed away.
Please come with me today.

A Safe Place February 1, 2009

In my car, we rest, watch the sunset on a winter day.
Alone with you, all is quiet, even my past.
We smile, but inside I cry having done without so long
We stare past our eyes, fumbling for words.

We have kept apart,
not knowing what to say,
or how to reach out.
Our lips and hands search,
but we forgot what it was to find.

How long must I wait again?
Is our love so wrong?
How long will we stay apart?
We travel quite a distance to share,
so scared of failing one another.
Still, we can only try.

In your arms, I know nobody can hurt me.
Against my chest, you are safe from the storm.
In a few hours, we have stopped the sun,
holding eternity and odds at bay.
We are close for a short time,
rejuvenated and charged.
We walk alone in secret,
glancing at one another,
and smile to ourselves.
How long must I wait for this safe place again?

Post Script

I decided to end this little collection now, shortly before my 42nd birthday. A close friend gave me a lined journal for writing with the idea that I might put new poetry in it. I thought it such a splendid idea that I wanted to have a sense of completion so that I start fresh. Hopefully, the new collection will be much bigger and better than this one. But I had fun writing it, even the depressing pieces. To paraphrase Jerry Garcia, "once we've played a song, we're done with it." Likewise, I feel the same about my poetry. It's part catharsis, part art, part garbage to some. Maybe it speaks to you, maybe it does not.

About Me:

I was born and raised in the St. Louis County, Missouri area. I went to Clayton public schools and earned my B.A. in Judaic Studies from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Subsequently, I earned his MSW from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. I continue to write the occasional poem or song as the fancy strikes, ever looking for my female muse. Since late 1999, I have worked in the computer field, but realized social work really was my calling, if only I can find a job! Maybe then I'd be too busy to fancy myself an arteest! I also simplified my poetry and music, stripping down to just a guitar, after attempting other instruments. I have learned what's important in life in the way of health, family and friends, faith, and trying to simply connect with others. If only I can learn to be more present, shutting my pie-hole and listening to the universe if not the birdies and bunnies for inspiration!