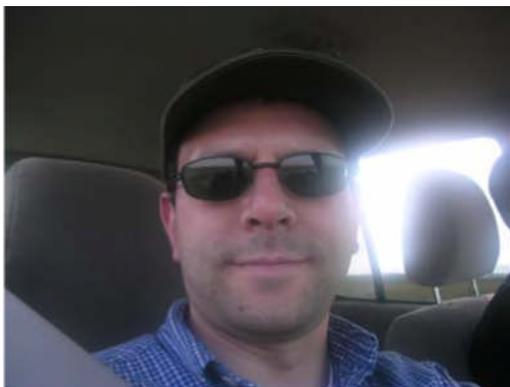


HEY! I Just Write This Stuff!



More Poetry by David M. Schwartz

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"Lunchtime in the Quad" in Number One, vol. 42, University of Missouri-Kansas City Press, 1989

Also by David M. Schwartz:

5/8 of Everything I've Written

"Ho-Ho", Said The Platypus and Other Snappy Titles Amber Waves of Nausea

A Pickle for Bernice

Some selections are revisions from those in 5/8 of Everything I've Written and are mostly from the 1980' and early 1990's as indicated by their individual publishing dates.

This book is dedicated to my family and friends, and a special person who will remain anonymous but contributed much editing and feedback. Special thanks to G-d for giving me the strength to share myself through this book when I should be doing something more productive, and for the folks with whom to share it.

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Please feel free to download them for your own reading pleasure but do not read them in the bathroom as there are some selections containing G-d's name. They may not be distributed without my express permission otherwise.

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A Simple Prayer May 29, 1996

Hey, I need some light and someone to listen to me.
I've sat with enemies where angels may be found.
Can't You hear I need a favor like so many times before?
I can't repay the kindness shown me, but I'm not completely down.

I could go to some building or a mystic land,
But tying myself to certain things, I no longer understand.
Still I try to fit in, like praying in prescribed fashion
But You don't respond, G-d, with a yes or no, or even okay.

I'm trying to reach for You, for someone, trying to share.
I'm trying to be fairly good for my own sake.
I'm reaching but find no one who cares
And I don't want to die or be alone without You.

Am I supposed to tear my life apart?
Should I fast and tear my shirt, or hide beneath a cover?
Can I be sent a messenger? A teacher? A lover?

I 'm so lost now, I'm scared
And books give no answers.
I cling to the past and wonder who is wise.
If I come to You now, is Your love for free?
Can things change or will I always face lies?

An Exit 12/31/87

When you sat at my table, you took all my words.
But I'm not weak for restraining myself.
It would've hurt you if I said what I wanted to do.
You asked me why I was so insecure, why my family held me back.
"It doesn't," I replied.

I walked you to the door and saw our friendship slipping,
Gasping for its one last bittersweet breath.
"See ya around," you said. "Maybe next week?" "Probably not," you said.
"Maybe in Spring," I said, not knowing you wouldn't be around.

All that's left is words, Rusting bikes, and forgotten trips to the creek.
If I speak the truth about faded glory, will you believe I'd liked to have helped you?
Or would you try to set me back twelve years?

I am not without problems, but quit criticizing me.
Maybe I wasted more of your time, and you needed more of mine. That's all right too.
This will never surface on the phone or in the mail, but you still have a part of me.

Another Song For You June 7, 1996

I played music last night with strangers I call friends,
And wished you were listening to our tunes.
I just couldn't go straight home at the end, no, no, no.

So, I crossed town for music at a late night store,
Despite threats of stormy weather.
I wondered what music might bring us together,
Though it was too late to knock on your door.

You're better than my dreams, than my best audience.
I've played alone and with late night lonely souls, But
I'd put my guitar down to sit with you in silence. We
could take it slow as the hours roll.

I force out these words as I think your name.
You do not hear my strum or invitation. If we
can't relate, my big ideas are to blame.
You don't say what you're feeling, not even frustration.

I'm missing your smile, and want to be with you.
I'm taking the risk now to lay it on the line.
It may be wrong, but what do you want me to do,
As I wait for your call or a sign?

I force out these words as I think your name.
You do not hear my strum or invitation. If we
can't relate, my big ideas are to blame.
You don't say what you're feeling, not even frustration.

Desert Face 6/21/04 © 2004 by David M. Schwartz

To a very special person, a life raft if I ever met one.

You interrupted me again as I was entering a vacuum,
staring back into my own head.

I was trapped in a mirror,
and barely recognized myself.

You would have seen me tear the glass out with my fingers
if you saw what I did.

I just finished shaving
when I took too close a look.

You might not notice it often.

But I hate what I see past the glasses, the stubble,
the coffee-stained teeth, the poor part of my hair.

I was looking at a barren parched field,
past the craters of my eyes and felt the hot wind scorch me. You
interrupted as I remembered every job, every bad decision. I half
laughed and cried at the music, at the books and friends, slipping
like sand or shaving cream through my fingers. You stopped me
from choking on muffled laughs
at how stupid I looked to myself.

You won't hear the whimpers and cries at my reaching out,
with no one reaching back.

The endless ringing and no one answers,
no one emails or smiles.

Instead, I primp and re-assemble my happy face
only met by pale mutes.

You don't deserve to see the scars.

Don't speak of Prozac
or cognitive therapy
as I don't put much credence in emotional dry heaves
or their repression.

I can only laugh at the scruff I missed on my chin,
at the burns on my neck which no salve will soothe
because at least I feel something.

I laugh at my college professor saying "show the poem, don't tell it"
and I say "Hell with it, this is salvation but not for credit."

I don't mean to lay this on you,
me laughing again at myself, not getting out much. I
don't want for you to turn away,
but believe me once another part of me is on paper, I
feel the pressure lift from my head.

If not you, someone else would read this.
Leave if you want, and I don't blame you just the same.
But as I look out into the desert in the back of my head,
you draw me back and give me water.
Your voice quenches and cools me.
I laugh as I am soothed, wondering what desert you pass through daily.

Donation May 31, 2003

The man comes up to me after morning services, brochure in hand.
He's dressed in traditional black, austere but smiling like my Eastern European forebears.
He's from a seminary in Jerusalem, I'm told.
So, I check my wallet, and I don't want to blow my twenty.
I have two dollars left

"Two dollars", I say to myself though I can't put a price on
history and tradition, on beards and books,
or wine cup held high and table-thumping joy on the Sabbath.

I've never been to seminary nor Europe
But I've seen "Fiddler On The Roof."
And heard my share of klezmer,
And my ate my share of matzo ball soup.

In an instant I've handed him my offering,
Like my bullock or meal offering at the Temple.
He thanks me and blesses me. I leave.

I leave synagogue thinking that was my atonement
For arrogance and anger, bitterness, gossip and gluttony,
Not to mention a heaping dose of coveting and lust.
I can't buy indulgences, but the reward for charity exists in the world to come.

So I am thankful for not being stuck in Poland,
For my lifestyle, for making it through traffic without my head exploding.
I'm thankful for my health, my family, my return to poetry,
my job which affords me a two dollar donation.

I drive to work trying to figure out what's happening to me. I
have sacrificed to be even marginally Jewish,
To go against my nature for what it's worth.
HaShem makes His plans, and they are for my good.
Still, I question a lot of things.

I want to run and can't help wonder how far I can get
Within my own head. I wonder if half of what I have done has been bribery.
But G-d knows and sees. G-d is waiting patiently.
My Maker doesn't need but wants my prayers. I'll pray them later today.
Yet the lottery didn't pay off. I didn't meet my match. I guess I was answered on those
two.
It's back to driving with guilt, and I strike my chest as I drive
For arrogance and anger, bitterness, gluttony, gossip and a whole lot of lust.

Glum June 23, 2004

I am so very glum, glum, glum.

The rain has started to drum, drum, drum on the window pane. It washes away all my hopes, dreams and plans down the drain.

I wanted to garden and ride my bicycle,
And now I am in more than a pickle.
What more can I ever bitterly and tritely say?

Hey, hey, hey!
I looked up and the clouds are going away.
Mr. Sun is laughing, mocking my fickle temperament.
So there's no reason to get bent.

The pretty weather has provided inspiration,
So I will go without hesitation. Yet, I can't
find a rhyming word with mulg.

Haggis January 23, 1994 With obvious apologies and salutations to Monty Python

Haggis on your table. Haggis on your plate.

Haggis delivered to your door-step. Haggis on a date.

Did you put Spam, Spam, Spam, Spam, Spa-a-am in-to your haggis?

Did you put Spam, Spam, Spam, Spam, Spa-a-am in-to your haggis?

Repeat entire song ad nauseum. Great for bus rides!

Haiku Nightmare Written Summer, 2003

In poetry class
It sonnet or haiku. I
chose the latter.

I left to sleep then
And was awakened by jazz As if the notes talked.

It never entered my mind Round midnight or other times
That now I should care.

Nancy with laughing
Face kissed mine in lovely dreams. She said change has
come.

Now It's about time
I wrote but bad bad whiskey Requires café au lait.

I learned from the Beats About madness in great ones In a
silent way.

I slept. Chet Baker Blew clarion calls at me.
Coltrane just said om.

I prayed yes or no
But heard that the Creator Has a master plan.

I heard I better Get hit in yo' soul And space is
the place.

Though I try haiku It's Easy to remember To
listen to Miles.

He blows Shh Peaceful And driftin' alone and I Drift
back to sleep soon.

My classmate read this And
said this I dig of you But
write sonnet for Caesar.

I say she's got juju
And she got witchcraft but she
Don't know love is.

Teacher says so what? What's
new? Take your pick. It's not a
witchhunt.

I get up to leave
To quit class then see
Watermelon man.

Dig it. Go man. Go.
Why not blow Fee-fi-fo-fum?
There's no room for squares.

I Pray April 6, 1985

I'm scared to death of dying
Though I'm no hunted man.
I've got so much to do and pray I find someone to love,
Someone to hold me.
I pray that my hope returns with my innocence and caring. I
ask G-d if it's gone forever, but there's no answer.
As tears for dead dreams well up inside, I find I'm more frightened.
My prayers seem unanswered and I don't know
If it isn't to myself, or even why I pray.

If I Am February 20, 1988

If I am a flower, you are the sun.
If I am a boat, you are water.
If I am a poem, you are the meter.
If I am a phrase, you are the words
And we create and compliment one another.
If I am a friend, please refuse me for our own good.
If I come too close, please lock yourself away.

Hey, I Just Write This Stuff! June 23, 2004

"If I don't do it, somebody else will." Dr. John from the song "Such A Night."

They call me upset and crazy.
They all say I am too lazy.
But I know that I will make it one day if
not with a job, then another way.

They say I have delusions,
but I insist it is just confusions
over faith and love and work
and it is no joke, I write sporadically.

I went to poetry classes
and songwriter workshops.
You can tell I tried to market to the masses,
I had an amp and mike, and pulled out all the stops.

Those days are gone and buried.
I don't try to impress anymore.
I don't write for anyone, but I'm lonely.
You can see I'm wary of love yet willing to open a door.

People may say I dream too much, or I am sad most of the time.
When I rarely write, my work remains rough,
my phrases terse so I opt for free verse.
My critics are mostly in my head, so take my work or leave it. I
can't really say why, but I just write this stuff.

I'm A Colorado Cowboy (Another Amorphous Love Song) June 1, 2004

I'm a Colorado cowboy, riding across the Kansas plains.

You wave at me riding shotgun, and my hands hold cds not reins.

You may think I'm a beatnik, but I've never ridden Bobby Dylan's train.

I travel all over, but I've only seen Boulder, Estes Park and Nederland. I walk and not bike, cause I couldn't stay on one, don't you understand? When you see me in my cowboy hat, you take me for a rambler or a stooge. But when I take my own photos baby don't my beard look grand?

When I climb mountains, Mama I'm day-dreaming of you.

I wish you were here with me cause there's so much we could do.

We could eat spinach pizza, drink beer and stare at the peaks.

The altitude makes my knees weak, but you make me feel brand new.

I ride so far Baby, but not so far west.

Never been through the Eisenhower tunnel but I'd go at your behest.

Don't it sound like my life is in jest?

I've been drinking so much coffee that my mind gets no rest.

Well, I'm back in St. Loo-ey, and might be here a long time.

If we went to Colorado or Frisco, you could spend my last dime.

We could see the valleys and the sun, and I would wear my 100% felt wool hat.

But I will have mercy on you, and I will end this rhyme.



It's Not Simple To Be A Simpleton Anymore September 4, 2003

For K.K.T, who makes me laugh probably more than I will ever deserve.

I was working at my call center job
dealing with customers and co-workers.
They made me question my knowledge and myself so
I felt like quite a knob.

I try not to be hostile or mad.
I find it better to be charitable, tolerant, glad and pleasant.
When I don't know everything, I admit when I'm wrong.
But being dumbed down makes the day longer,
as I lose my grip on reality.

At home one night I dreamt a doozie,
As I thought myself on a park bench minding my own. I
enjoyed being alone when Lou Costello came to visit. He
didn't look well but he was thinner,
and what he said made me woozie.

He said: "Buddy, take my advice,
You can be large or small, work on computers or at a store.
But it's always best to be nice,
and it's not simple to be a simpleton anymore.

No, you can read all the books or stick to the comics.
You can watch my movies like instructional films, or
even take a queue from Harvey.
Don't count your woes so you'll feel marvy.
Despite ignoring the news or knocks to your noggin',
it's not simple to be a simpleton anymore.

The dream still seems to have no end.
As I still expect him to meet Abbott in the hereafter and then Bela Lugosi.
Still that one thought at the job made me free...
It's not simple to be a simpleton anymore.

May June 24, 2004

In May and we first met,
writing forth and back searching for connections.
We negotiated the right time and place,
finding honesty and compassion.

It was May and moonlight filled my yard and shone through the trees. I
felt young again waiting for fireflies.
They don't come around so much
but we could chase them sometime.

I smile whenever we meet, grinning for days after
and I'd been waiting so long until now.
Though you can take your time,
you know that I am cautious too.
The night passes more easily and is not as dark anymore.
How is it with you?

It's so hot, I don't feel like eating or drinking,
just spending time when we can.
Perhaps marvel at the stars and new moon.
The sun leaves it's golden sliver shadow,
and it is a comfort to feel renewed each month.

You say you don't feel well,
and you rest your head on your arms,
your curls flow down your shoulders as you cough and laugh
and your eyes twinkle. How can I not smile?

It doesn't matter if we speak in measured phrases,
like taking slow steps across the moon.
We each rove our minds like planets for the right word,
though none could be wrong.
We collect the thoughts like treasures when we can.

I apologize if I am pushy,
if I open a door too wide or shut you out,
or you feel you must close off.
You are like a satellite or bright star,
flashing back your light, as if responding to my hello. I
am surprised that you initiate calling me,
as if establishing connection between Earth and craft
or a rare spark from a not so distant galaxy.

At times we cannot reach between,
we must just float on our own or come back for refueling.
Sometimes we are able to come together
like twin suns sitting amongst the dark of night.
Either way, I feel the warm night breeze,
I hear your voice and wonder if the message and feeling
will bounce back one quiet summer night.

Morning December 20, 1982 Revised June 27, 2004 It
is not winter yet, while there's frost on the ground And
not a penny more to bet
On when the sun will rise, when the wind will sound,
Or when the man will slowly wipe the sleep from his eyes.

He arises from the bed, and open the window.
To meet the sun burning off the dread
Warming slightly though cold he's never known.
He wants to touch a soft hand, it does not matter when.

But his life and another's are busy,
They never bother to call, never finding time for lunch or time that's free.
So he tells her that their friendship will fail,
As he stares into the hazy sky above, hoping to make time for love.

Shaving Blues November 18, 1989 Got
them shaving blues in the morning, The
blues in the evening too.
Got them blues when girls won't kiss me,
When I sand wood with my face.

When I lather up, the water gets too hot.
I cut my finger on the blade and can't get stubble off
Even when I try hard, a shadow I've still got.

People tell me to grow a beard, but I get bored.
I twist the hairs, then they think I'm weird.
I guess I'll get my face waxed and it will last three months. It
will burn and itch, and wearing dried paraffin is a glitch.

I have me these blues, when soap slides off my greasy face.
I'll still have them, as aftershave eats my skin. Five o'clock
comes around, and I have to shave agin.



Six-String Breakdown August 9, 1996 The entire set of fine lyrics added June 28, 2004
Deedly Deedly Deedly Dee
Deedly Dum Dee Dum Deedly Deedly Dee
Dum Dum Deedly Deedly Dee Dee Dee Dum
Come Bill and Jolie, with your swill. Bring
your bongos, drink your fill. Wear a vest with
tassels, or a tank top, We're gonna dig poetry
'til we drop. I don't care whether you think I'm
a sap,
Get a load of this wrap which will leave you feeling so very
Dumb Deedly Dum Deedly Dee Deedly
Dum Dee Dum Dee Deedly Deedly Dum Dum Dum Dum
You know I mean it when I admit this tune is
Dumb, So very Deedly Dee Dumb, Dumb Dumb.

Sort Of Shy One June 8, 2004

I'm a sort of shy one when I see you pass by.
I'm a sort of shy one and I could just as well hide.
We could try to get close,
and weather any storm, you and I.

You know I've been hurt before and like you I've had my share.
I've been hurt so deeply, so I act like I don't care.
But with you I would take a chance,
and for you more pain I would bear.

When you smiled at me, it lifted me when I was down.
When your eyes sparkled, you lit up the town. You seem
like a princess or treasure I don't deserve. But it feels
like we want one another around.

Well I've been half asleep, I woke up confused. You
came into my life and up till now I felt abused. I
didn't know I'd been without kindness, and now
that's what I don't want to lose.

I've been a lonely one, kept out of sight too long.
I've held myself both high and low,
seems all I do is wrong.
We barely know one another,
but I felt driven to write you this song.

Are you a sort of shy one?
Can you let me in or are you too tired? I
just want to thank you,
for reviving me and making me inspired.

Stagnant May 15, 1996 Revised June 28, 2004

I've been changing musical styles and gear,
And I'm only filling a hole.

I seem to change like changing strings.

But when I need my music, it's when no one is near, When
shadows even stare back, not playing a lover's role.

I owned a Crate Acoustic, on which I lost money, and dignity too. Before that
there was a Fender Vibro-champ, after I traded in the Squier. Don't even remind
me of the twelve-string, music books, banjo and mandolin. Strange how the
music didn't get me higher.

Rather than growing, I shrank to the state I'm in.

My guitar has sat by many dark days.

I comfort and caress her, as I miss old times, old friends.

I'm far from richer or wiser and I'm in a static phase.

I use the same chords, same bends, yet she never complains.

Lessons and gadgets don't last and I've got empty pain.

Even if I got an amp, start a band, get my rush from playing, a
P.A. system won't magnify what I'm saying. I'd trade crazy
dreams for one who understands.

Stupid Blues May 27, 2003 Yes, Dear Reader, even us artists need naps.

Don't stick your head in a blender, or you will be sorry.
Don't stick your head in a blender, or you will be sorry.
Your face will be too tender.
You might resemble me.

Don't stick your finger in an outlet, or you will get a shock.
Don't stick your finger in an outlet, or you will get a shock.
You won't get any special powers,
but it will throw your heart for a knock.

Well, I beg you please, won't you take my advice?
Well, I beg you please, won't you take my advice?
I've been around enough to know,
blenders and outlets will not make you feel nice.

I work all day, and I study all night long. I
work all day, and I study all night long.
Haven't found a true love,
because I only took time for this song.

If you go out in public, please brush and floss your teeth. If
you go out in public, please brush and floss your teeth.
Comb your hair and keep your pants pressed
and always change what's underneath.

If your mama can't tell you, I guess someone ought to say. If
your mama can't tell you, I guess someone ought to say.
When I find a need to give guidance,
you have surely lost your way.

You might be asking when this song will meet its end.
You might be asking when this song will meet its end.
There's no need to holler or to even curse.
I just have to forget the words, coming round the bend.

Don't stick your head in a blender, like I said before.
Don't stick your head in a blender, like I said before.
Your face will be too tender.
And the cable tv. guy will not like the gore.

Unresolved Unfinished Masterpiece#758 June 23, 2004

It's three and a half hours past dawn.
The hot white sun fades into the sky. It
is more bleached than blue.
The air is still and light.
My head should only be as clear.

It's a new day with new promise of jobs and love.
So I drive on to Miles Davis' Nefertiti
blasting the cool vent air with window down slightly.
Horns, bass and drum encircle me.

The tunes are old, but I have not heard them
so I feel sophisticated and beat
as if I knew bop personally.
But I laugh to myself, that once again
I always think myself older,
but I don't know anything more than anyone.
It's the same as post-concert coolness of past-midnight Sundays.
Then again, I don't get out.

As I breathe in the air, I think back to October
to the same halcyon clarity and evergreen air
to smells of myrtle, willow and citron.
I am rejuvenated but lose the feeling too quickly.
All I have is my jazz on the way to work,
something to soothe me through the day.
I get somewhere I didn't reach not 20 minutes before in my daily prayers.
Happy? I guess so.

Today, I will write snippets for the sake of busy work.
I will dash them in my head and hearken back to high school
pen and paper in pocket. As if I could write then what I write now!
As if I could not know and yet be cock-sure I did!
My foolishness amazes me.

I laugh again at Miles and praise the cool wind,
and the magic traction guiding my off-ramp descent
like ballet or figure-skating straight on auto-pilot.
After I turn off the music, and adjust the window-shade, I
linger, not wishing to descend to work.
And tomorrow, I will repeat again,
having nothing better nor more lucrative.

Used To May 27, 2004 Inspired by John Prine's song "Hello In There"

I don't remember my heroes, like I used to do.
I don't venerate the Beatles or anyone else anymore.
There's not much sense in looking back,
and I can just as soon bury high school and college,
leaving all the clothes and books behind.

I don't play guitar or write poetry like I used to try.
The words don't come so quickly,
nor does the desire to sing.
I come home, get to other work and get up again the next day,
but nobody's there for an audience so it's not much fun.

Maybe I'm getting used to the first third of my life.
Maybe I'm too world-weary but spoiled.
No use saying that I think too much,
because I just want to turn off all the thoughts inside.

I know I can't, so I fix some chamomile tea.
I hope that it makes me sleep to forget what's become of dreams. I
once wrote that maybe dreams change or people change,
but now I'm only sure that I'm used to hearing what I've already said.
Still I try to push out these demons, and maybe get some sleep.

When I had little, I had so much.
When I had no car, no computer, no cd's,
I didn't know desire, but now I can't shut them out.
Nor do I bother, trying to share them.

Yet, I used to like the idea of being in love.
Romance within my head doesn't come so easily.
My targets are making cash, surviving another day.
Neither love finds me, nor do I find my muse.

I don't write pictures through my poetry. I
don't even tell the yarns that I made up. My
thoughts come like a torrent of mud,
they pour out my mouth, with no sign of letting up.

Forgive me for seeking silent quiet.
It's just work and over-commitment dragging me down.
Should you read this, know I'm okay.
You might even feel the same, there's nobody to blame anyhow.

Untitled October 5, 1985 Revised June 27,2004

August died as my dreams were stolen by the summer breeze. I
need a smile, any remaining childish hope.
See, I've spent most of my money touring cities and fields
Crying from laughter and just because I needed to cry. What
more could I want?

I tell myself over again, "You have seven more months,
Take them slow, make them last, do things right." Still, I
wonder if each day will be my last.

Don't forsake me, Israel.
Let me walk in your sun, caves and canyons.
So little is my time on earth, much love I have for you.

When my days end, I'll laugh at my youth.
I'll smile for all the places I lived, my homeland,
And sights I saw and loved.

When I Awake June 27, 2003

The summer sun used to fall heavy, resting on my shoulders.
They used to ache from weight and fever.
The St. Louis snow would sit heavy on my shovel, causing me to strain my back.
They are past now into darkness, like the birds cooing and calling for their mates.

All is silent and dark, and I can't move.
I don't budge like my Saturday naps, when I didn't bother to turn
And just like infancy. I am finally secure.

In the future, I will be ready.
I won't need to roll through mud or under the water's bed. I
won't need to fly to get home.

I won't be bothered by the bus station bombs
By the dinners that were disturbed, because enemies will be scattered and flee. I
send out this hope in silence, my tongue too heavy to move now.
My thoughts are useless. They aren't needed like in the past because I just wait.

When I awake, it won't be too hot or cold. The season won't matter.
I will see only friends and smile. Then, I will laugh from my belly as I used to do. I
will grin like when I received my birthday gifts.

I will pay my vow in courtyards, the one I made so long ago.
Though I came with nothing, I will find enough to suffice.
My gladness will be sweeter than my present sleep, all anguish forgotten.
One day soon, I hope to awaken and return.

Without Her January 29, 1988

If only I could hate, I could forget.

My love will be complicated one way or another.

But I was both blessed and cursed with memory,

Though I can't always visualize her face.

But I can itemize my mistakes,

And wish I could go on without her.

About the Author:

David M. Schwartz was born and raised in the St.Louis County, Missouri area. He went to Clayton public schools and earned his B.A. in Judaic Studies from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Subsequently, he earned his MSW from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. He continues to remain an active writer and songwriter. Since late 1999, he has worked in the computer field, trying to wed his technological and people skills with both disastrous and amusing results.

This book was self-published by David M. Schwartz with the help of a printer and lots of caffeine. Did I say lots? I meant LOTS!!!!

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