



**joefiles 102**  
the revelry of childhood  
in a smiling light pole

## have you forgotten 9-11?

this government  
has gotten so  
rotten, bad funny  
like a joke you  
don't want to laugh  
at, but it's ironic  
relevance makes your  
jug split at the  
proverbial seams.

there's a new  
9/11 movie about  
that flight 93 plane  
that crashed in pennsylvania  
and they really want  
people to get dooped back  
into the emotion  
of a dark american day,  
but i won't see it because  
it's all a damned farce.

donald rumsfeld slipped up  
and told a group of soldiers  
during christmas eve one year  
that the plane had been shot down  
out of the skies.

no one covered this story,  
and it stands as a fairy tale  
as the drunken tongue of rumsfeld  
likely had clarity that day,  
and the events of the 4 and final  
plane hide in denial.

there's not even a wolf howl,  
but a cup of clown tears as  
we were lied about the one  
day that has wrought more bush  
on everyone and given us reason  
to believe that everyday our  
own presidential pals shoot us  
out of the sky, but hide it  
behind the guise of national security  
and cute hollywood images of  
falsity.

## HAVING BALLS

it takes  
balls to have balls  
and even when you  
don't have any balls  
you still have balls  
and as the small  
kid kicks around a  
rubber ball back  
and forth into  
infinity  
you know that  
there will always be  
balls  
and the birth of  
other balls.

## HER SPROUTS

if i could yank  
it off,  
i would have my wife  
shout into a tiny seedling,  
then i would seal it up,  
plant it,  
water it,  
place it in the sun and  
view it sprout over time  
just looking into the delight  
it would bring  
because  
she always has delightful,  
inventive ideas  
like the sole wheel on a child's  
unicycle spinning  
to an eventual  
beginning.

**i dreamed about california**

and miles' first dip  
into the ocean and climbing up a ladder  
to a roof to see the  
sunset and miles and i gliding through the ocean  
and it all felt, calm,  
serene and something that is deja vu.

**i feel way too dry  
to be made of this much water.**

as the sky looks  
on with it's one  
big open blue pore,  
i wonder where all

the clouds have gone  
and why evaporation  
is all around me.

not an ocean for  
hours to my right  
and left, i may have  
to rely on a big

man made pond to  
immerse my bones,  
but it's much too  
dirty to get more

than maybe a half  
of a sexual innuendo  
ripped from my brow.

so instead i'm gonna  
go out back, fill  
up my kid's pool  
and leap in like

i own the thing  
and the sky can  
finally look down on my for once as a

cloud swimming  
in the enormity of the ground.

## **i had a dream that i was dustin hoffman**

at the oscars  
getting a standing ovation  
and wondering how  
i was gonna  
tell them  
that  
i was joe,  
not dustin,  
but i just smiled  
as the crowd roared forward  
and  
i wondered  
how  
my  
psyche  
was  
going  
to  
explain  
this  
bizzare,  
vanity filled  
subconscious  
journey  
of  
petty  
indulgence?

**i wanna just sit down and watch you**

as the poem slips  
off the mantelpiece  
into the lake of guitar chords  
and try to imagine new letters  
for notes  
as the slowly approaching voice  
becomes my new  
subconscious voice  
and the wind plays off as though  
it never knew  
what the surface of the  
earth tasted like ..

this is what it would be  
like to watch you,  
miles boy,  
as the cup of your water flits  
back and fro like a small ocean wave  
in your drinking cup just  
before it falls to the floor  
and makes me accidentally type  
a 3,  
only to quickly revert back,  
hit delete  
and continue further more as  
your eyes fixate on your diaper line  
in pure,  
infant silence.



## idle time idea

when  
i find  
the  
long  
stretches of  
time needed,  
i'm going  
to  
write the  
great american  
novel  
based on all  
hundreds of pics  
i have taken  
of strangers over  
the past 15 years.

so don't steal  
this idea,  
ok?

even if you don't  
believe in  
america,  
or strangers,  
or the great novel,  
or  
little old me.

ok?

**if this page of words**

outlasts your wit  
and laughter,  
i want you to remember  
that the power of  
a poem  
is only our attempt to  
understand the moment we  
are born  
and that final moment  
before death  
sweeps us into  
the hopes that  
we wished  
all along this planet  
was able to afford on a  
stable, consistent basis.

good night,  
love kids.

## ILLEGAL MUSIC PRISON

i met a fictional  
dude one time  
that had downloaded so much  
illegal music  
that he had an invisible  
pact with the cosmos,  
and this world,  
that he could never  
ever play an instrument with  
any sort of reliability.

but he had the most powerful  
ears and a music producer's brain  
as his fingers averted musical  
instruments as though they were  
hot poison that would pull  
him immediately into the bowels  
of a hell he couldn't  
imagine.

**i'm gonna write a poem during the middle of the day.**

not just a day,  
but the creamy laziness of a  
sunday  
after sleeping in until ten forty-five  
in the morning.

restive,  
and armed with books to sell,  
we head to the city  
to see how the other side is supposed  
to rumble.

all along,  
thoughts of what to do  
around the house,  
like power spraying  
the driveway  
like hosing down a hardened  
criminal in jail,  
then how the strip of traffic  
around would  
react to a comet plummeting  
over the skyline towards  
an unknown locale over the  
green, mushroomed horizon.

then,  
the silence of some city  
hipster behind the book counter  
sets me off and i wonder  
how people get the jobs  
they have and why folks  
don't just tell them  
that they deserve to lie in bed  
and not report to work ..

ever.

and then we are back  
in the car with our  
small baby in the back  
as he preens his gaze hard  
towards the window dreaming of  
a poem he doesn't

know how to write.

and that's where i  
come in during this  
sunny side up afternoon  
with the tree leaves  
wagging like a hundred  
tiny puppy tails  
telling of my boy's  
brief 16 months of life  
as the wind picks up just  
a bit outside.

## **it's tax time**

and i drive by the  
low rent tax hut in an  
old white castle's restaurant  
to always see someone  
out front in a patriotic  
costume waving people  
in to give the government  
their due.

the most consistent,  
recognizable face  
is a local drunk guy  
that paces up and down the sidewalk  
dreaming of another drink  
and a sideways set of fingers  
waving peace goes insanely up and  
down up and down up and down  
up and down.

his eyes are squint,  
pink nose,  
swollen face,  
and the blare of  
traffic screams by as he makes no  
eye contact,  
and usually looks down at the ground.

this man likely hasn't paid taxes for  
a decade or more,  
but he's your beacon of hope  
that's likely getting paid less than  
a sweat shop child,  
but he's doing it in the cold,  
rain, or beating sun.

sometimes he's the statue of liberty,  
other times he's uncle sam  
and his eyes sparkle towards the ground  
he paces with a dream better than  
the american one,  
and something exquisite like a whiskey  
on the rocks.

his cartoon gait,  
matched by invisible puffs of cartoon  
thoughts escape above his head as that one,  
brave person gets inspired by his gimmick  
and decides that they should go in  
and finally file their taxes because  
the smell of old white castle burgers  
may still permeate the building's  
innards.

## **LIFE IN DEATH**

it's not the doing the will kill  
you piece by bit,  
it's the waiting.

the idle time in stale offices,  
dank holding rooms,  
in your own house,  
elevators,  
empty apartments,  
the middle of an ocean.

all the waiting  
for the next thing or  
expected scenario runs  
about the brain like  
tumbling jelly hunks.

and in writing this as i wait,  
smearing the dried, used pieces  
of flesh into this paper  
while life continues for a bit over  
three-quarters of us.

## magic baby hand

my boy  
miles has  
this magic  
baby hand response  
that resembles a  
pharmacist smashing together  
potions for a  
prescription  
medication.

one finger in a cone  
shape  
twists, smashes and moves  
in rabid moments on another  
flat palm.

it's as if he's communicating  
with invisible people,  
or learned a language from another  
planet while in the womb  
and he wants me to know about it.

sometimes i look up into the sky  
for a descending silvery ship,  
or towards the room corner  
for a broom to fall or  
crumb to move as the invisible  
being takes their order from  
the smart baby in the high chair.

and at other times,  
i think he's just telling me  
he knows how his hands work and  
we wants me to join him.

there together smashing one hand  
into another  
as the cats look on with  
kind, rustled eyes.



## **melting into forever**

i'm starting to believe  
more in forever as the  
moment seconds land on  
my like flecks of pollen  
over the invisible tv  
chatter.

i'm starting to feel  
forever as my morning  
notes are not just  
ensembles  
of words, but tiny  
swaths of black ink  
that are making a shiny  
shale ocean for us to sail  
over.

we are forever as the  
tiny slip of silvery  
ring from you hugs  
to my  
finger like a midget  
onto a tall man's pant leg  
for the last bite of  
recognition.

i have seen forever  
through your eyes as  
photographs of you become  
reflections in my  
fingernails flipping  
over invisible money and found  
nickels.

i dig the idea of  
forever because  
your face is my  
clock as the second  
hand swipes over  
your pebbles of  
invisible hairs  
singing a tune i'll  
never be able to  
recreate for you

except to smash these characters into  
paper and touch  
your fingerprints  
as though your  
mother created them for  
me.

## **nervous clocks**

seems  
like  
lately  
i'm  
frantic  
to  
fill  
time  
when  
time  
wants  
nothing  
to  
do  
with  
me  
and  
my  
time  
consuming  
pace.

it's  
scare  
of  
my  
quick,  
and  
full  
disposal  
of  
a  
of  
it's  
pals  
like  
the  
seconds,  
minutes,  
hours  
and  
days.

## **nice foil**

i loved that small,  
tattered piece of tinfoil  
that was barely covering  
the strawberry tin.

it wasn't as effective  
as a new, longer, shinier  
piece of tin foil,  
but why should a end it's life.

sure, there were several  
pieces of strawberry that were  
dry like an old woman's toes,  
but it was enough of a sacrifice  
to keep that character filled,  
eternally crinkled piece of aluminum  
in our lives.

i just ignored the bad job it  
was doing and left without a word.

it sat there gently guarding the  
rest of the plump, red woman lips  
from the dry air about.

i loved that piece of foil.

there's just no way i could be  
foiled, myself, that morning  
as the strawberries remained  
defiant under their used cover.

## one cool tree

there was as  
big, exquisite,  
origami twisted  
tree behind the school up  
the street.

a fella in the neighborhood  
that has 4 kids and grew up  
around here,  
told me how he built a treehouse  
in the coolest tree ever.

i looked at him and  
instantly garnered respect  
for the guy who found the coolest tree  
ever.

my wife also grew up around here  
and always loved that tree.

and would schedule my walking path  
around going by that old tree  
to snap a photo or look further into  
an undiscovered branch.

then one day,  
it was gone.

vanished.

the coolest tree was murdered.

it did nothing but  
shelter,  
and shower all of us  
with a bit of mother nature's  
finest art.

gone.

who would cut down  
the coolest tree ever?

really .. who would?

how could they let it hang  
on their head.

the thousands of memories,  
and future expectations just  
hacked away like a used diaper.

at this point,

my only redeeming hope is that  
the paper you are reading this  
on was a byproduct of  
the coolest tree ever  
and if that's not the case,  
i'm just gonna squeeze my eyes  
tight and remember  
the timber roller coaster  
sending out  
the faint laugh.

## **one hundred wasted well**

politicians want  
to mail me a hundred  
dollar check because  
they cannot do their job.

the legislators on  
capitol hill think  
it's cute to propose  
a hundred bucks towards my  
mailbox as they turn  
in their gas expense form for this month.

the proposed 100 gas  
check can be reallocated  
towards the impeachment of bush/cheney/rumsfeld  
instead of heading  
towards the weary mouth of my bill laden mail slot.

the 100 dollar attempt  
to quash the horror of  
6 years under a ruthless regime would only be one,  
one sixteen millionth  
of a fraction of actual anguish these people  
have inflicted onto a good country.

go ahead and mail my  
one hundred dollar  
piece of paper to  
yourself and remember to take  
it with you for  
your next colon check.

## **ORGASM POINTS**

i have finally  
hit an solid realization about  
the mutuality between men and women  
that makes sense.

maybe on of the few  
that makes sense.

the reason why women  
can have many multiple orgasms  
is to give men scant, extra points  
to mask the inevitable  
stupidity  
we are bound to concoct as  
the quiver of delight  
races  
up her spine  
and into  
pure,  
perfection.



## **our home is fraught with cats.**

we have three cats,  
one pink one and  
two gray ones.

the gray one's don't  
get along,  
and usually fight with  
their full sets of sharp cat  
claws.

the pink one doesn't care about  
all this bickering.

then we have a black cat  
the hangs around,  
along with another pink one,  
and likely several gray clones as well.

we are done with cats.

with a 15-month old boy,  
an 8 year old,  
a fish,  
many plants,  
and each other,  
the cats and their piss markings  
are all too much.

the hop in the window wells with  
thundering scratches to bellow  
out absurd meows.

this,  
waking the baby,  
and throwing off our sleep,  
as the cats  
sift around our home like  
prison guards waiting for a break.

yellowed eyes,  
frothing whiskers,  
and our home as the beacon.

we can do without the cats  
and all their tales of nine lives,  
so bring on the squirrels and more  
big birds,  
because there may be a battle  
at the home of  
feline dreams.

## Perpetual Clinton Longing

i had a dream  
last night that  
several pictures of  
bill clinton popped up  
on a hill  
with a tiny insect head  
piqued over the top  
of the smiling photograph.

at this,  
i pulled out my camera  
to snap some pictures  
of such an odd encounter.

but,  
as i pulled out my camera,  
the tiny insects approached  
with that wobbly, doting face  
of clinton.

it was like a warm bath  
seeing the former face of  
solid american leadership,  
the face that could bring  
all of us some needed ease  
in these times of bush ruination.

and after i snapped my pics,  
i jotted off to my next dream,  
sitting at a seat in a kitchen  
along the counter tops,  
and noticed that the praying mantis  
holding the clinton picture  
was sitting right next to me.

looking over me like a killer queen,  
spitting water  
with it's bright green mouth,  
just hanging there on the ground  
with those fat candy topping eye ball  
granulates,  
just looking around with the luck  
of the ages trying to remind us  
that this political nightmare  
hidden in the bushes will end,  
very,  
very soon via dreamland luck.

## **plop poop plam**

my miles boy had a  
shitty night some  
months back.

daring enough to  
extract him from  
his reliant diaper  
protection to roam the house, it all  
came tumbling down quickly.

from one room to  
the next, all over  
my clothes and onto  
the floor of the shower stall as the  
smudges of daily diet  
wouldn't end.

after it was all  
over with, i sighed  
with the clean bubbles  
of once tainted legislation  
and laughed about  
the moments that will  
stick with our skin until the final cut.

the next morning i was  
in the basement of a  
church waiting with the parents of first  
communion kids and  
smelt the din of my  
previous night.

as i looked down, i  
noticed that the stench  
from my newly washed pants would not leave me and  
cling on like a miner  
waiting for a rescue in the abysmal below.

running home  
to change  
into something new,  
i figured it was  
my boy's right to smear me  
with stench and make

me race hard and heartier towards a cleaner life as  
he grows another diaper older.

## POETRY MAKING MACHINE

if you sift  
through the millions of  
pages that poets have created you  
would encounter most fears that humans  
have,  
and they would all be elaborated upon  
for the worth of pure subjectivity.

and as your eyes drip over these pages,  
you would realize grab the ultimate fear of  
any poet if a 'poetry making machine' was invented.

that's right.

like a music making machine.

computer programs that plot out books.

any of many modern day inventions that allow  
the end user to create, concoct and invent  
any number of clever inventions aided by the  
invisible jowls of a program that knows  
nothing of the inadequacies of the end user.

so take the 'poetry making machine' that could  
pump out poems based on selected words and  
notions of anyone.

just input bits of pieces of flat,  
vapid words and the 'poetry making machine'  
would spit out a poem that could make old  
high school teachers wipe away tears,  
and current girlfriends horny enough to forget  
the dull talks they have had.

like pure magic  
without all the effort,  
years of pounding out bad poems,  
many more moments of sacrifice  
all dumped into some software program on  
an anonymous machine that would make that  
pile of trash look like a golden genie home.

and i have now reigned in as the champion  
poet hammering home the biggest fear of  
them all.

this concludes my scary poem.

## **POLITICIANS AS FIRECRACKERS**

the closest i have  
come to  
explaining  
political candidates  
to children  
is to compare  
them to firecrackers.

as the 4th of july  
approaches,  
you suddenly see signs for  
them all over the place.

flooding the sides of roadways,  
and over billboards.

you get excited,  
spent lots of time and money to  
procure the good.

get home,  
light the punks  
and shoot them off.

doesn't last as long as the  
price and effort it too to get them.

then,  
it's done.

almost forgettable  
as you have a yard of burnt waste  
and an empty wallet.

your political candidate is  
burnt and gone  
as you wonder where they took your money  
as the lid of the trashcan  
slams that period onto the end of  
another annual sentence.

## **poor pain**

i had several  
thoughts about  
the economics  
and physical solitude  
we should all  
get from them that  
we toil over  
and with.

PAINT - the main part of  
this word is 'pain'.

POETRY - starts with  
the first 2 letters of poor - 'PO'

this is the best way  
to begin my artistic resume.

nice to meet you.

## **post-beaner**

my ability to be a good  
fake mexican beaner has  
nearly been extinguished

from my torrent flame of  
the past.

beaner was the nickname  
all my rabid, spit toothed  
friends and foes from  
the fourth grade would call me.

not able to comprehend the  
hair on their hands, they  
didn't know the dark  
skinned difference between  
italia and mexico, thus  
i was the faithful  
beaner.

i played along with my  
love of school burritos  
and uneda-undeda-arriba  
mouse mimics.

age has shaken that  
luster off my cloak.

and now when  
i tell folks that  
i used to be the beaner  
i get the  
cockeyed stare and a quick retort  
that i make a better deigo by.



## **RAIN BAPTISMAL**

as if anything more could  
happen as the washing machine breaks for good,  
the cat pisses in the last  
of our last clean laundry,  
birth control for my balls soon,  
my wife thinks about the past,  
our child is ambling without walking,  
trying to sell a home and  
the list goes on  
while my sweet wife shoves her  
head through the car window  
into the torrents of rain with  
loud pen strokes of lightning about  
just laughing,  
wiping the cold water  
off her face as i grip the  
wheel of the car harder as  
a sailor skipper,  
knowing that she is  
recovering from life  
with the swift flow of  
shower baptismal water  
leaving the skies for  
the destination called  
all of us.

## returning voter

as tiring  
as voting has  
become,  
i had to say 'no' to  
a ballot issue.

kansas city was trying to  
pass a tax increase  
to finance a new rollover roof  
for the sports teams,  
along with trying to keep them in town.

i would rather they all slip into  
a secret silver submarine at midnight  
and float away from this one horse town  
to never be heard from again.

the owners own more money than god's elder nephew,  
and together have enough to build a roof  
over this sprawling, suburbanized town.

so, i knew my vote was needed to keep  
the horned goblins away from any more of  
my whittled monthly check.

comfortable with my morning vote,  
on the way home from work that night,  
i saw a little kid with football helmet and jersey on  
standing next to his red bike with a simple sign  
that read 'YES'.

and i was relieved for this kid  
to simply want the retention of his youth,  
shielded from the layered economics of  
such a vote.

i almost second guessed my vote,  
but i knew that he wouldn't second guess his  
as his tarnished, cheap plastic helmet  
glowered in that fading evening light  
ready for all our clocks to spring forward  
in a daylight savings shadow of another  
vanishing vote.

## **RISE OF THE FLESH MACHINE**

i saw a video clip  
of a table saw that  
stops and lowers immediately  
when it touches flesh.

instantly ..

and as i replayed the  
video several times like  
a junior crime squad leader,  
i memorized its hidden moves,  
paint,  
conjecture,  
and shapes  
because when  
the machines rise  
to rid the vermin on earth or space,  
this will be their leader.

evading flesh  
in the beginning,  
but set to devour  
us all as the nip of sheet covers  
our tired,  
unfascinating lower lips  
before  
sleep starts.

## SHAPELY FRUITS

all of the squares of my  
past, youth & before now  
squib down into my  
open hatch like circles as I fall in love with  
something more than yesterday  
and grab my wife like we'll be together  
beyond this flesh life,  
while my miles tugs at my pant and  
zen boy rockets into another verbal joke  
beyond the wall  
and the sound of my perceptive memory  
crumbles a bit more into more melodic  
shapes and the sound of my current world  
sounds of faint hairs growing into the side  
of a mature, juicy nectarine.

## **showbiz landfill solution**

in response  
to our burgeoning  
trash problem on  
planet earth  
i'd love to build  
the world's largest  
landfill trash ball,  
then sell tickets to tons  
of people so they can  
watch firsthand the launch  
of this amazing, melded  
waste ball pop into  
outer space in a contest  
i would like to call:  
'HOW AMERICAN CAN I BE.'

i think i would  
win this ultimate  
race.

## **Sinking Healers**

why does she continue  
to let them go when  
they give her the blends of  
healing she speaks  
to my lovely so fervently about?

how could she  
let the dove  
glide from her  
grip when all  
she wanted was a  
feather and an  
ounce of freedom  
to lift her from  
hells that she cannot  
accurately voice  
except to the surface  
of another vodka/soda?

where has she released  
her newest cure as the  
disease of yesterday wells  
into her irises and  
spills onto her shirt  
like cold, used soup from  
yesterday's miracle lunch?

when is so going to  
get the hint that our  
remedies resemble a  
crying  
wolf resting in a  
miraculous hole  
licking the refreshing  
rain puddle as  
any thought of hell  
gets healed with one  
open hand towards a  
clean shaven  
face.

## **small, happy coupling**

a little  
old couple off  
the main road  
i take to work  
epitomize the  
culmination of wedding vows.

a small red donkey wood cutout  
with their namesake  
leans gently on their  
gas light lamp in  
their perfectly cut,  
and grown lawn.

off to the side of their  
perfectly sized house is  
a set of shaded swings  
that you can see their invisible  
skins holding hands under  
the 72 degreed sun.

all the windows of the home  
are clean in ways i have  
never seen on a home,  
and the morning paper is always  
folded and expertly placed  
at a 23 degree angle for  
the awaiting hands of the man  
to bring in stories of  
divorce, insanity.

and the several times i have  
eye balled this couple,  
i think about perfect outdoor  
weddings and truth behind a vow  
as their old bones tote around  
as if they are both still barely 10 years  
old and the wonder of the world  
will never fade because of the  
rest of the world breaking the  
wrong breads.

i'm sure at this moment  
he's pouring her a cup of hot  
coffee with a smidge of sugar and  
creamer as she  
winks at him, and lightly touches  
her foot to his as the new spring  
tree leaves out front wag just a  
bit like a well aged dog.

## **smashing shadows**

at night,  
i see the dusk  
shadows of the eroding  
day literally slicing  
through everyone  
that drive along the road way.

big bulky black spears,  
and tiny dark spikes  
ping and penetrate everyone  
flying down the roadway oblivious  
to one another until the moment  
matters the most to them.

stuck in their bubble of music,  
or news, or silence,  
they act relatively tame  
that their bodies, torsos  
are getting annihilated by  
the continual barrage of shadows  
violently throwing their  
dark colors all over their bodies.

not even thinking whether or not  
insurance covers shadow injuries,  
all these people haphazardly just  
fly through these dangerous spikes  
of dark violence despite my pleading  
eyes towards their direction  
as the increasing shadows  
smash down over my skins.

all of us together here,  
no one is safe from the  
dark spires that continue to add,  
multiply and mount against us.

is there anyone that could defeat  
this cloud.

it's as if we all are enjoying  
the pain together,  
as our invisible foes remain strong,  
courageous,  
like us in our sure defeating victory.



## **spreading poems**

i finally found a way  
to get my poems out to an eager,  
diligent reading audience.

you know all those reply envelopes you get  
with credit card applications,  
loan applications,  
membership renewals,  
subscriptions requests?

well,  
i used all of those innocent glued  
envelopes going to neat destinations all  
over the country to send out my  
finest poems.

my favorite one was about my son's dirty  
diapers being the equivalent of getting  
trash in the mail day after day.

not only do i now have a thriving fan base,  
all of those ad flyers and junket pieces  
don't arrive anymore.

it's been weeks and my fans don't want to  
siphon neatly pre-paid envelopes to  
ingest my words.

i have killed several pages with one pen.

got myself that long awaited fan base without  
paying for it and wounding my soul,  
along with riding the hex of junk mail in my box  
so i can focus on all those rejection letters  
from real die hard fans - editors.

**strips of scattered light bugs**

go whisking over june  
like sparklers looking  
for the next big holiday  
while the baby suckles the  
last of soy stuck in a  
cow's only white spot  
as the cracks of cold air  
speed over my insect bites  
all over my legs as the  
baseballs lie silent for  
the night while the bats  
go fluttering about like  
released prisoners in the  
eye of a gutter carrying off  
what remains of this day into  
the trough of tomorrow.

## **symbolism**

there is nothing  
like s  
sllopily spelled  
picec  
of retxyty while  
you are a little crotcke dt to get  
yo to be laugthy an  
beleiv3 in bein sibmoe;

**the art of living art**

is that it  
will always be alive,  
and never leave us.

art is one of the  
very few things that  
can cheat death,  
evade taxation,  
evoke birth,  
and come out with  
both a smile and a  
grimace as the  
lights fade to  
black in the  
sparse hallway.

art is the  
grand proactivator  
that constantly moves  
forward  
as most of the world  
darts forwards,  
then backwards,  
then forwards,  
back more,  
forward a bit,  
back some more,  
leaping forward,  
back,  
forth.

it watches all of us  
with mild eyes,  
and a raging heart,  
and knows what is going  
to live and what  
may die.

in the end,  
it's the one thing  
you can watch,  
stare,  
and peer into knowing  
that thoughts of  
dying can finally  
just end  
with  
living art.

## **the bard of cancer**

is bearing down  
on the entire world.

town hall meetings  
on war, AIDS, drunk drivers,  
the status of Islam, and all of our relatives are  
getting swallowed up by  
the ever expanding red hole in the carpet  
waiting to catch an  
eye hold on you or yours.

my father in law looks  
about his room and  
unread books with a  
slight daze as his newly bald  
head wavers in an  
ocean thought over a life well lived and i look on  
appreciatively  
that he gave made his amazing daughter.

all the neighbors,  
people magazine articles,  
the morning obituaries are full of more ink  
spots of potential  
cures as the cancer wind rages against the window  
screens and waits for us all.

the bullet screaming  
over the winds in the hood  
and the lopping stinger in the bee's rectum  
just waits as i look  
over the traces of my father in laws balding head  
noticing tiny traces  
of hair coming back,  
hanging on for the next miracle  
to come smashing down  
on us all like a piano  
playing the first note of  
our collective sonata.

## the ending credits

of a movie are probably the most memorable parts of a film for most people that spent more time on a project than you ever will.

[illegible]

flit around like a  
birth registry or roll  
call at a class reunion  
for amnesiac clowns  
revisiting their lost  
high school days.

## the eternal animal haven

we are  
the home of lost,  
neglected, healthy,  
jostled animals and  
rodents of this  
quadrant of  
neighborhood.

last night,  
for instance,  
the tiny squirts of  
sound were coming  
from the backyard.

in the rain,  
with flashlight blaring,  
i noticed a tiny squirrel  
that was hovering  
in a bough of grass away  
from light,  
and cats.

we took him in,  
gave him salt/sugar water,  
and have him tight in a  
coiled fish bowl.

at other times,  
we see injured lizards  
on the patio,  
strange cats meow at our  
window,  
the dust of alice in wonderland's  
dander in the air.

there are errant dogs that  
flit by the house here and  
there,  
a whole host of big squirrels  
that dart about  
as the tiny baby eyed squirrel  
looked at me this morning  
as though he may have recognized me  
before.

and with that,  
he has,  
as have most  
all these animals  
swaggering around  
with faint recollections  
of where the  
safe haven resides.

## THE FLOOD OF MY VACUUM

my creative brain  
exists in a fluid vacuum  
all of my own.

as much as i try to  
get it out there,  
it still doesn't penetrate  
the audience base my  
daytime imagination would  
care for.

it reaches out like a slowly  
growing puddle of spilled water,  
swallowing up anonymous strangers,  
close friends,  
some family members,  
and someone comes by and sops it  
up with a huge,  
dry sponge.

and i'm stuck there wondering  
if i should knock cup over again.

the next time,  
i knock over 2 bigger cups.

same thing.

8 bigger cups the following time.

same results.

and hit finally hits me that  
i should just blow up a water tower  
and laugh as the people swing through  
all the cascading rivers of  
blackened letters,  
finally seeing a bit of it,  
as the rivers slam up against  
the doors of several local bookstores  
and suddenly i have to decide between  
writing or promoting.

then,  
the notion of an anonymous  
vacuum becomes a small quiet vessel  
by which i can watch my fictional  
water tower crumble into a  
mass of lovely confusion.



## The Following Recorder

a guy  
in my dream  
a while  
back  
said  
that he records  
my thoughts  
religiously  
and hopes  
that i'm not  
leading him  
astray  
and before  
i woke up,  
i remembered  
that  
i hadn't caught  
his  
name as  
i knew  
that i likely  
already  
led  
him somewhere  
he  
wasn't used to.

## **the fuzzy pre-winter worms**

are the leaders  
drumming the news of  
all weathercasters.

many of them crawl in  
through  
the casters ears and  
grab the brain  
microphone to lead  
us all to the weather  
stalls.

with their many legs,  
and prophetic hairs,  
they are the ones in control  
of winter around here,  
and lounge in the spring.

but they are always the ones  
that tell us which way the rains  
will arrive and how many  
berries will grown on the frozen  
spring trees.

and when you see them crawling  
around on the ground,  
or on the side of a home,  
or over a cold rock,  
remember they are heading towards  
their studios the  
enter the voices that pretend  
they know how it's going to  
happen with their swami cloth,  
and used loins.

so trust the hair worms,  
as they walk towards you ears  
with delicate  
precision.

## THE HAPPY DIAGNOSIS

being too  
giggly or happy  
can land you in a precocious  
spot amongst doctors,  
so conceal the smiles.

if you have to laugh,  
wait till they leave the room.

if you cannot do either of these,  
you may have to take medication  
to curb those impulses.

you may just be one of the  
abnormalities that are  
written on the walls of  
stranger urinals.

or you could just be another one  
of the few that don't believe  
in people because you found yourself  
and nature trustworthy enough  
to laugh and smile the way you do.

so go ahead and shit laughter all over  
the doctors chairs, office and clipboard,  
and once you get that prescribed dope,  
give it to your friends for having to  
deal with your happy ass.

## the last collection

i've been  
thinking lately  
about not collecting  
anything anymore.

even pages of unpublished  
poems.

so, you may never  
see this one ever.

and if you do  
find your fingers holding this  
page,  
it will only be a testament  
to the fact that i cannot  
keep a promise to myself,  
and that i have so  
many  
things that i need to  
share it with others.

so, when you are done with this,  
get rid of it,  
collecting is a nasty,  
american sort of habit  
that needs to be broken.

broken word by word,  
letter by letter.

## the local mayor

there's a little  
stately man that  
lives by where i work  
who is referred to as  
'the mayor'

a tiny black man  
with bright white hats  
lined with fake floral,  
he usually has on a paisley jacket,  
clean one toned color pants,  
shirt,  
and he strides like a  
jet line towards the next  
altitude plateau.

usually on the way to the  
library about a mile away,  
he strides back with a full plastic  
bag of knowledge for his brain  
to quickly swallow.

his claim to fame is taping  
big, fat marked signs on the windows  
of any car that decides to park in front  
of his house.

he paces up and down the block in  
a panic as the fat pieces of  
gray tape on the sign for the trespasser  
to gawk at after their meeting,  
or short jaunt to wherever they  
are going.

his warnings always say that he'll call  
the cops the next time  
and that his wife is sick and  
he cannot be bothered with careening around  
a strangers car.

i've never seen him in a car in my life,  
and i'm thinking he's just an anti-car kind  
of guy.

so stay away from the mayor's house,  
i hear he's running out of tape, markers, signs,  
but has plenty of well, multi-edged rocks.

## **the lonely kid hero**

i watch one lonely kid  
walking along  
the roadway past my work  
window religiously  
every morning and afternoon  
as though he is a page  
in a book i will one day  
finally understand as the  
full meaning continues  
to pass me like a  
speeding 18-wheeler.  
one day he skipped on  
by in fully davey crockett  
battle gear, all alone  
as usual, while the tail of his coonskin  
cap dangled triumphantly in the  
sunshine and i got saddened in the miracle  
of this titan of schoolyard walks.

his strong, lonely  
striding each day  
epitomizes the loneliness we all  
feel now and will feel  
later on - from my red headed  
wife to my tiny  
18-month old miles boy and it  
pitted my olive.

i want to talk to this kid,  
shake his hand, tell him life  
is a blinding  
8-track of beauty that will  
floor him someday, but his hesitant and  
hobbled walk already knows  
that and as that coon tail  
waggles like a real

animal perched on his scalp,  
i know that loneliness is one of the few  
diseases we never hear about,  
but we can beat as we walk forwards and  
backwards each and every brim filled day.

## **THE PREPARATION**

reading to brace yourself  
for the worst is like preparing  
for death as the tap of a commander's claw  
falls down on a pile of gold skulls that  
are meaningless unless you buy the tokens  
dropped into a well and as the neurologist  
washes his hands anonymously,  
i wring my fingernails for a tiny gust of  
hope that can look in another puzzle piece  
of god's big, wide face.

## **the water spider baby**

our boy miles  
ambles over the thousands  
of tiny wood lines along the  
floor as if he's  
an experienced water bug  
on a search for a jesus plank  
of concrete water.

careful not to fall through  
the surface of his invisible  
water wood, he  
stares with deep concentration  
as we watch in wonder at  
how he'll make it  
from one end to the other.

after his water bug crawl,  
we just may get him to maneuver  
his hands  
over a bag of grapes for our  
thirsty and alcohol desired  
tongues.

and as he crosses the threshold  
to the cat box to dump a toy  
into the  
fecal abyss, i race over to  
his imploring hand and almost  
fall face  
forward as i smash and slip  
on a tiny green grape towards my tiny  
tentacled hero.



## THE WORRY

there is indeed always something  
as you turn into the parking lot  
to stop,  
breath and approach being  
barely significant.

there will always be  
something as the wind shifts  
and her hole grips harder  
as the mystery of half a lifetime  
escapes her front lip.

always something  
as the kitchen faucet drips  
errantly  
and the sound of forever  
is a bit you will  
hear in all her night dreams  
and forget over the  
blast of yellow morning sun.

## THE WRITTEN SCRAWL

i haven't sat down  
with a pen in  
so long that i feel like  
an animal sequestered in  
a zoo for a crime  
some token god committed on accident.

the letters bleed and  
bend about with Confucius  
glowering as  
A's feel like E's and  
all are equally unrecognizable.

there are missing dots  
over the I's and  
the T's and H's stand  
as parallel monoliths  
craving more sugar  
than the recipe called for.

i may have to  
end this now because  
the further i travel  
away from the initial  
'I',  
the further I leave  
myself and this hazard  
scrawl of poem.

## **TINY MEANING REVEALED**

a tight rolled  
circle of my wife's  
pink panties  
lie square on the edge of  
our bath mat  
while traces of new  
shedding exist on unused  
pads and thoughts  
of my pending vas cut  
go through my brain  
i wonder  
for one of the few times  
in a while  
if tomorrow will  
be the finest  
day yet,  
or the end to what  
all of us could call  
a premature end  
to a dance  
we  
want to be  
wholly included within.

## Us vs. Animal

regular wild animals  
will last so much  
longer than human  
beings because they  
don't carry the drama, smokes,  
cognac bottle,  
needles, guns, AIDS  
and government lies that we have to.

remember the strength  
of that zoo visit as  
you peer into those  
caged eye balls gleaming back,  
or those ignoring  
flanks of animal parts  
living their simple lives  
because they are the winners.

furthermore, the wildlife  
shows merely illustrate all  
the winners you laud in magazines, game shows,  
lifetime achievement awards  
and other academy awards as they  
triumphantly waddle about  
with beautiful ignorance as creatures that begrudgingly  
may have to be reincarnated  
into one of us someday.

## Vibrant Conspirators

someone told me  
recently about a  
little chicken sized  
conspiracy of jets  
spraying dangerous toxins  
into the air  
from their tiny  
white fingernail scratch across  
the sky.

it was supposed to be  
the government's covert,  
dark coated way of  
littering the population  
with dangerous chemicals  
to give us cancers  
and hold the population  
at bay.

and when i hear  
these tiny gum droplets  
of talk,  
i wonder if the  
government has finally  
driven many folks mad  
or if they are so mad  
that their fake smiles,  
and expensive ties  
have all the sheep  
meandering in a precise  
line towards our  
certain guillotine.

and even that i know  
this tiny dust trail  
could be littering all  
of us with showers of  
nasty fallout,  
i look into the trail  
with a different view now  
knowing that  
the older i get  
both the truth  
and the lie  
are likely the same  
3 sided cube.

## **wares of our lives**

i find myself  
looking at  
silverware  
sometimes for long  
stretches.

of all the mouths  
it has touched,  
how many tongues  
it's had to endure,  
how many scoops of  
food it has served,  
how many teaspoons  
of sugar it has  
bestowed,  
how many gulps of  
medicine it has  
surveyed,  
how many different  
dish soaps have  
made it new,  
and how many rust  
spots that never  
came to fruition.

and i fall in love  
with silver,  
and the job it does  
all the time.

the silent, salient  
heroes of the  
kitchen drawer just  
waiting to  
be your best friend  
for the duration of  
a meal, or the  
coaxing of a cold.

and as i stop  
looking at the  
silver stretch of  
utilitarianism,

i listen for a

small whisper or a

faint voice  
to possibly come  
forth

because the  
personality in a  
spoon or fork  
is about as thick  
as a richly woven  
character  
in a morning  
cartoon strip.

## WELL, THERE IS NO FAIR REFORM

you start feeling the  
sting of being a lawful,  
tax paying, full-time worker in  
America when you go to pay  
for your groceries at the store  
and some hispanic woman and  
others from 'poverty' status  
swipe an EBT card over hundreds of  
dollars worth of groceries and their  
totals just vanish like the 30 percent  
from my invisible pay stub.

all these people are able bodied  
and limber to work, but they  
shop instead.

recently,  
a woman had 12 cents remaining from  
the explosion of her thunderous EBT swipe  
eating my tax donation and she gave  
a dumb look to the public crowd  
while swimming through her dress pockets  
with sun looking off into nothingness  
as the cashier dug into her broken pocket  
and gave her the rest of the allotted  
pittance.

the welfare woman smiled,  
meekly said something inaudibly faint,  
and shuffled off with her quite obese frame  
to the next lobster claw  
dripping with free golden,  
battered oil as the cost of  
crude oil breaks my  
rule abiding balls.



## WHAT NEEDS TO BE SAVED

i wanna save my  
miles boy from any  
inadequacies that he might  
have throughout this life  
as the docs boil  
over suppositions,  
then i realize that he  
has saved me.

he's a promised child,  
and his beam of gap toothed  
smiles is everything that  
is normal about this world  
as he pawns at the legs of  
strange doctors attempting  
to be important.

and when his drool litters  
the front of his shirt like a  
spilled cup of water,  
i always realize that he's  
the smartest person in the room  
as we all sit ashamed in clothes  
with our aged brains and  
flimsy notions of justice.

miles boy just whalers about  
with happy abandon as the chess match  
moves forward and  
in one huge moment of instant surprise,  
he turns around with a beaming smile  
and utters a loud, knowing sound  
signaling that we are all  
in check mate.

## where's everyone slinking off to?

i find  
myself staring  
at all the faces  
in passing cars  
coming home from  
work at night  
wondering where  
the hell they're  
all going.

out for a beer?  
picking up siblings?  
to dig up the hidden treasure?  
no where?  
to oregon?  
to kansas?  
to another job?

and i wonder if  
they wonder where i'm  
going  
or if wondering is worth  
it all.

then,  
i catch that one face,  
with enough determination  
to lead a fighting army,  
and i'm snapped back down to  
a song lyric or string  
of words coming through my  
headphones and  
i simply forget that  
the world is slipping around me  
like a big stick  
protruding out of a rushing river.

and at once,  
the gentle glide of a  
high flying bird  
is much, much more  
interesting than  
anything remotely  
human  
going  
by  
in  
a speedy  
piece of colored metal.

## wife poem

my wife just got her newly  
published journal with her poem  
in it yesterday and i was happier  
than any poem i ever got published.

sure, she's been published  
before, a much better poet  
than i am, and has a master's  
degree in the craft, but she  
got in there and fought the  
words well.

now, the city, and country get  
roll into the collective  
verve and meter of her life.

they get to see the woman i  
married through their own  
mental visage and experience  
her breath in an invisible  
pentameter that will only be  
gustosed by a passing wind,  
if lucky.

but i get to hold her ungloved  
hand as she peers wide eyed  
through her dark sun glass  
bulbs into my whole face  
with that tiny smile of  
knowing that her poetry is  
next to her in hand and  
stroller and walking in  
front of her as the world  
tries to penetrate ever  
so slight  
and persistent.

## WINNING VIETNAM

for the first  
time ever,  
i had a vietnam veteran  
neighbor tell me that we would  
have won the vietnam conflict if the  
peace protestors  
back in the US wouldn't have been so powerful  
and pesky.

he continued forth with his combat boots  
that we were several big conflicts away from  
shutting down the enemy and coming home victorious.

with whiskied breath and done with my  
venom against the current lot of crooks running  
this country,  
he continued that the same could happen  
with the war in iraq.

while the explosions of another 4th of july  
careened over both of our  
eager american ear drums,  
i neglected to ask him about all the living  
veterans that contribute will to this society  
instead of coming home in body bags for a war  
that would have never been won.

and i think about the other 2004 political candidate,  
john kerry,  
and how his surviving the losing vietnam war  
would have been a shame if he wouldn't have  
taken on the colossal loser known as  
our current president leading us into  
another useless vietnam.

## **wrong call donnie**

i got into work  
several monday's back  
to have seven messages on  
via my red light on my phone.

in this new digital age,  
i hardly get 7 messages in  
one week.

the first message was from  
some correctional prison  
in kansas.

the operator was going through  
a pre-ordained recording,  
then the inmate said his name  
with the rustle and clack of  
prison commotion in the background,  
he said 'DONNIE'

as the operator continued her  
request to accept this phone call  
into the analog void,  
i deleted the message.

the next one was donnie with  
the operator again.

and call 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were  
the same way.

i figured the 7 would be a pleading  
from donnie as his weekly allotment of  
calls went wasted on the wrong number,  
to some dude working for the school district.

to this day, i keep getting messages  
with long stretches of silence as it  
takes donnie longer than most people  
to figure out that he's called the wrong  
number.

it might be why he's in jail.

and for just once,  
i want to pick up that phone  
and tell donnie to call another combination  
of numerals because he's wasting all  
his time looking for his girl as i  
hit the delete button once again  
on another call, another jailed day for donnie.

## **YEARS**

coming up on a year  
that last year happened  
as the distance between planets  
shrink like cotton in a hot dryer  
and the re-sellability of last year  
will be a dollar a day and when  
we collect the \$365 allotted to us,  
we will try to  
release these memories to you as this year becomes  
a moment no one will trace in for  
any mound of sweat.

**your horseshoe ambitions**

rattle around the coffee can of my morning  
that gave me enough cotton around  
my heels to leave the house.

the horseshoe dreams crash around  
my fan blades like a trapped bird  
looking to find a double doored  
cage to set fire to.

all the horseshoe aspirations that ruck  
around your nostril hairs are the sum  
accumulation of the things you have smelt,  
but refused to be a part of your vision.

your right side up horseshoe floats  
around the open archway like a mistletoe  
looking for the end of december to  
arrive on a blank calendar.

## **AFRICAN MYSTERY**

without spending  
many hours trying to  
put together the facts,  
how can so many people in africa  
continually die through  
hunger, genocide and disease  
on such a huge,  
defeating way?

year after year,  
the UN, US, celebrities, and the lot  
have to intervene to help save the  
smallest soul and biggest man in  
their dark african skins.

it makes no sense.

how can these governmental factions  
in africa allow it?

they always looked well fed and groomed  
with their loafers, military medals and  
tightly woven afros,  
but all their people are dying in miserable  
conditions.

the story of africa is the  
mesmerizing notion that  
history teachers us  
very little  
and the notion of human governments as  
kind beacons is flimsy.



## **ali**

i'm officially  
2 degrees away  
from muhammad ali  
because of some teacher  
at a school i visit  
as the bumblebee i  
saw the other day  
in the garage was  
big, and robust enough  
to tear through a  
butterfly  
and today it's going  
to be a record april  
high of 89 degrees  
as the boxer  
enters the ring  
and  
gods leave for  
spring break.

## **ANIMAL IMMIGRATION**

our house has  
become a smuggling point for  
cats,  
as my dreams recount.

in through the dryer vent,  
out of mexico,  
into the US as the border control  
dogs prowl and  
itch their inner ears as though the  
infections are coming  
while the rats plan for their  
next pig vacation to Canada  
which just happens to be  
above ground  
and right down the street.

## ANTI-TRAGIC

when i hear  
tragic,  
i think that beauty  
is tragic,  
thus this life is  
tragic.

smashed into the  
biological differences  
and sociological squabbles,  
we are all augmented to  
rely on the brain to get  
us over the pimple,  
or under the mump.

and as the tragedy  
takes on a flower in a  
wrestling match of wit,  
you can guarantee that  
both will get entangled  
in a blur of speed that  
any final result will  
be of both squibbed like  
a smashed packet of mustard and  
ketchup all over the  
street just drying for the next  
pair of eyes to decipher.

## **attentive poem**

i fear i don't give  
you enough attention  
as stacks of pages flit  
over the  
hungry winds like  
lost music the world  
was to hear for the  
healing to  
begin.

i'm not so sure i have  
spent enough time with  
you all as the smell of  
paint fumes and baby  
spit fill my laundry  
basket below our covered feet.

i am beginning to think  
that you may need me  
to personally pen these  
words onto a page  
just so that you  
can fulfill your  
empirical twitch to  
confirm  
everything and  
deny something.

here in the beginning  
of nothing we stand  
like a satchel of  
wooden gods  
wondering where the  
carver went for lunch,  
and i believe i can give you  
the attention you  
deserve if you can  
define the next  
moment along this

trail of hot dogs  
and napkin rolls.

## **birds of moon harbor**

the brown hawk  
on a neighboring  
telephone pole  
stares at two  
friend crows  
on their own  
utility pole  
across the street.

racked with  
beaks of potential,  
the wind races  
over my human  
eye balls  
wondering if  
the 2 against  
one will work  
in this scenario.

can the lone hawk  
steal the ire of  
the crow's pole  
and run away with the  
folly of another  
fading day of sunlight?

or will the crows  
wake up the  
scarecrows with  
a pair of harrow  
screeches  
to end the day on  
a high note.

after a stretch  
of toiling in my  
own soup, i lost  
track of all  
3 birds as  
they went on to  
battle, or barter  
another stick for  
a nest to be made.

either way, the  
only thing that  
remains are the  
poles carrying  
electricity to my  
silent machine much  
more silent and  
less exciting that

the lost birds of  
moon harbor.

## BOOK WIFE

i always wanted to marry  
a woman that was well read and  
still reads quit a bit  
and my dream bucket was  
heaped with  
so many covers, spines, words,  
ink and pulp that i have  
no idea where i'm supposed to begin.

my caroline has read everything  
printed - classics, suspense, crime,  
law, murder, non-fiction, bios -  
it goes on -

she divulges books as most do  
food in an all you can eat buffet.

done with books in days and my paltry  
read sits like a convicted criminal waiting for  
retrial.

as the books melt into the sap of our  
existence, i don't know what  
to say to someone that asks if m y  
wife reads.

i go blank for all the fullness  
as another book slips from her  
powdered, perfumed hand  
into the proverbial 'read' pile.

## chocolate city king

some guy with a loud,  
brightly colored  
chocolate city shirt  
was taking up two lanes  
at the meager spaced gas  
pump at the 7-11.

as i yanked my car in,  
trying to fit my needle through  
the tiny slip of thread,  
i snorted under my hot breath,  
and came up to the pump cockeyed,  
ready to illustrate the  
idiocy of this gas starved  
stranger.

as i hopped out and  
pulled the golden horn to  
my car hole,  
he yells over,  
'THIS MUST BE THE ONLY  
CAR IN THE WORLD WITH A GAS  
CAP ON THE RIGHT SIDE.'

i stopped,  
looked around  
and gave him a polite laugh.

he was tossing out a veiled  
excuse as others looked on  
in befuddlement,  
and i went on ahead and winced  
at the rising price of gas.

with that in mind,  
his hogging both pumps didn't  
seem that bad  
as my dollar amount went  
past 30 and i thought  
i'd like to ramrod OPEC  
for hogging all our money.

again,  
all i never really wanted  
to learn came to me  
through a benign visit  
to the gas pump.



## **cold goblin gone**

i got a note the other day on the  
internet from a kid we used to  
drink with named 'goblin boy'.

he was the one that would eat  
a fist of habaneras and  
wash it down with a bottle of Tabasco.

he was the one that would  
rubber mallet a package of big  
thumb tacks to his inner thigh out  
of boredom, and looking for a laugh.

he had the look in his eye that could  
tame a wild cougar looking for a  
steady diet of human meat.

and he now lives on the outer rim  
of Antarctica,  
while his profession stays a mystery.

we are linked because of the  
one teacher in 8th grade that  
all guys had to shift in their seats  
to look at as we plodded over the  
algebraic solutions that most have since forgotten.

her name was mrs. james.

one day over a string of coffee cups  
we talked about this teacher and  
how she was a delicious break in  
our puberty addled junior high days.

it was the brightest i saw this dark,  
yet courageous kid glow under those  
dirty yellow bulbs of a suburban coffeehouse.

a week or so after we talked about this,  
he came up to me somewhere and shook  
my hand with a hearty thanks.

our talk, and junior high rehashings  
saved him from having a bad acid trip

the night after he left his coffee mug.

it was all in a days work as i look at  
the image of him all alone there on  
the Antarctic ice breathing gulps of  
cold air all alone as if under a newer,  
more clean source of yellowed light living in Antarctica

## Colossal Gush

one  
afternoon  
while going to the store,  
or somewhere to eat,  
my wife and i saw  
a big water main break  
in the park jutting out  
enormous gusts of  
water.

like an elephant trunk  
telling the world  
that water is good,  
and sunlight is the reason  
why we remain alive.

and for that brief moment  
of chaotic gushing,  
i felt at ease from  
newness of fatherhood,  
husbandry, politics  
and the lack of  
good clean water.

## CONSTANT MOTION

when the notion of everything  
in around us constantly moves,  
never stops,  
always changes from one moment to another,  
i think about my 19-month old boy,  
or 8-year old son  
constantly moving.

several weeks ago,  
while holding my baby or lying next to my older boy  
i noticed that they never stopped moving.

whether they itched their face,  
moved their foot,  
wiggled their fingers,  
flipped their heads up briefly,  
grabbed at something,  
jostled something else,  
or blinked really hard,  
they didn't stop moving for  
one moment and it was amazing.

like a thousand daffodil heads in a field  
moving in random,  
chaotic movements as the petals,  
pistols,  
and stems raced to the next moment as if  
the prior moment just wasn't enough  
to satiate their cup of active atoms.

and as these kids move more in 10 minutes  
than most human adults do in a fortnight,  
i'm reassured that  
evolution is the most powerful  
thing that humans have  
ever discovered.

## **current state of friendship**

my  
old  
friends  
know  
current  
rock  
stars  
and  
anymore  
that's  
about  
as  
interesting  
as  
a  
used,  
wet  
paper  
bag  
stuck  
to  
the  
top  
of  
a  
shiny,  
black  
limousine.

**dangerous bulbs of radishes**

explode over my  
skins like gorged  
beets as the trolloping  
elves that carry  
my past away piece by piece are  
thinking about  
when their fruits  
of labor  
will finally come to fruition  
and carry  
them on into the future.

## **DAYS GONE**

day confusion has  
settled in so bad  
that i may never  
pay my bills on time  
again  
and the appointments  
will just be toy darts  
in a treasure chest i won't  
know how to cash.

so as my confusion widens,  
i may just start making up names for my days,  
develop my own calendar  
and melt into something more  
significant than following the orders  
of an old haggard  
timeline.

## **dead robin bird**

the sight of a  
dead robin in  
the road is  
about as backwards  
to me as a rhino  
outpacing a leopard.

it's a sight  
that shouldn't  
be played out  
in a busy roadway,  
but it shows that there is as  
much slowness as their is quickness.

what kind of diet  
was that bird on?

did he get a hold  
of a buck of saturated  
fat and peck his beak  
in a puddle of mountain dew?

was it a bad worm?

or was he just the  
slow bird?

i honor of this bird,  
i swerved hard out  
of the way and gave  
him the name of 'duke daring'  
as the swirl of  
summer dandelion  
spores usher us all to another living moment.



## **dry living**

i enjoy  
the cactus family  
and beta fish clan  
because they are  
the most water frugal  
things on earth,  
next to the humped camel.

but,  
i'm a bit uneasy around them  
because i'm so full of water,  
and use water like a hippo  
bathing in a big zoo pool.

we have an understanding,  
though.

i give the fish all the food  
his tiny rotating mouth needs,  
and toss the cacti in my life  
towards the sunlight.

their tall appetites for food  
are equaled to my daily  
toil to keep my body washed with  
cool, clean water.

and together,  
with our skin, pricks, and fins,  
we all strive one more day forward  
to fight off the  
dull, dull dry spells.

## **Elton John**

the one musician  
that looks as though  
he has the most cash out of  
everyone and  
could afford some  
cosmetic,  
surgical help  
is elton john  
and as the years  
easily fly away,  
he gets  
worse looking.

## **fighting for something**

generations of  
shifty kids looking  
to fight something  
more than the bully on a suburban playground  
with all their volcanic  
angst have found it in 2006 america.

in beautiful afghanistan  
or exotic iraq, and maybe  
soon the hot erotica of iran, one can journey  
with gun in hand.

fighting to keep king  
george and his pals in  
the upper tax brackets  
as the planes of 9/11 haunt

the newborns of 2001,  
the kids take it on the chin.

the tune of vietnam  
that won't end and the  
shadow of korea blaring though

the journalist's dark 1  
windowed office for a  
memory to be recalculated.

the halls of current  
military uniform remind  
me of bright oranged  
fatigues worn by inmates,  
except the soldier as admitted themselves into

this prison as the spiked  
republican regime sleeps  
comfortable on white  
starched sheets tonight.

thanks to all the kids that  
are gutsy enough to face the  
bullets, bombs

and depravity of war, i'm

just the lone kid with a us flag on his home  
and a white kerchief in his  
front pocket hoping that death  
isn't the end  
and tomorrow will finally  
be acknowledged as forever.

## **FRIENDS**

it's a fight  
to keep up with  
people  
and the older you get,  
the younger some  
get until they resemble  
mucus sacks of  
embryo's flitting  
into the wired glue  
of a long lost  
bottle of adhesive  
holding everyone

apart.

## **gary mullet**

a local realtor guy  
in the neighborhood  
needs to get a different  
handle or trim his legal  
rights to a new name.

his handle is gary mullet  
and he sells homes in the  
name of god's new  
militant christian army  
in south kc.

the plain, unassuming, not  
ugly home has been on the  
market so long that  
gary's mullet has to be  
close to his anklets as the sun  
lashes down on  
his maroon, blood red sign  
like a sign of something  
amiss in the next  
june jet stream.

and no one is ever out in  
front of the house except  
for new recruits to  
this god's army aimlessly  
walking by with wobbly gait, and not  
recognizing the silent,  
loud comedy of such a name  
screaming to  
conversing traffic.

there lies gary mullet  
in a head of hair we can  
all guess at while the  
white washed sounds of  
quiet riot rise and the empty  
vodka bottle of  
yesterday merely becomes  
a vessel for this tiny  
message gary will never  
get.

## goose belly

the white underbellies  
of a straight line of flying geese  
through my moon roof  
is enough to make the sun  
not all that important anymore.

they're precise flow of wings,  
and allegiance carry the sky's blue,  
and cottony clouds along their  
strong wing feathers.

looking like they are going to  
dine at some restaurant south,  
they have that distinct forward  
progress that could teach us all  
a little something about finishing  
something before it's not done.

and as i think about their fading  
wings from my view,  
i throw my eyes quickly forward  
to see the green light ahead and  
concentrate on the slight arc  
that i'm going to make through  
the intersection.

all delicate,  
and strangely hazardous  
like the arrow of a morning  
goose migration.

## **gravy on everything**

i have added something  
else to my sprawling list  
of desires in this world  
and it's to have gravy on  
everything.

i don't want much.

don't need much, but i do desire gravy.

buckets of golden,  
metaphorical, delicious,  
potato staining gravy.

all over my wife's shoes,  
my sons winter gloves,  
my 8-year olds game  
console,  
my toothbrush,  
my father's diabetic needle,  
my mother's english  
bulldog's dry nose,  
my brother's two kids,  
my cats constricted eye balls,  
and all over the morning  
streets i drive to make  
some more money that  
will be dutifully spent.

heaps and heaps,  
never ending in a torrent  
of metaphoric glory in a  
thundercloud as big as  
god's knee cap.

dumped all over the earth  
like that sherwin williams  
logo to litter this  
planet with the right trash  
for everyone to dip their  
tiny fingers in and  
marvel.



## hairy question

the one big question  
i will have for  
god when and  
if i get the chance to hold some  
serious council  
with him is why do  
we have to have  
so much hair around our genitals.

huge tufts of thick,  
wiry hair protecting  
us from the perils  
of the rest of our mainly  
hairless bodies  
has always eluded me.

i cannot grow  
hair on the contours  
of my face to feign  
a decent beard, but i have to  
harbor enough  
hair downstairs to  
mimic a good 70's afro.

it seems like an excessive  
waste of hair as our genitals  
hide behind forests of thick brush  
to be approached by a  
hairless hand or an intimate opposing genital for  
some quality time.

here's to all the  
brave clippers, razors and  
waxes that have kept the downstairs free of  
too much clutter for  
all the years of our  
hairy human stay.

## **HARDER THAN FIGHTING**

i've laid down my arms  
because the fight is  
illegal and the only barter  
to be gained is another  
scar covered by a bruise as the  
retired general shouts into a  
bullhorn at my ear drums as though  
i'm a hack in a fast food lane speaker,  
and as the breath exhales for the  
90th time this morning,  
i see the wet on my wife's eye balls  
and my son's tongue as though  
it will be dew waiting to  
greet me with something more  
powerful than a blistering  
fist fight.