

# **joefiles 104 (CIV)**

**The revenge of tomorrow**



## OVERHEAD PLANES

if  
you  
can  
guess  
correctly  
how  
many  
airplanes  
are  
above  
you  
now  
in  
the  
navigational  
air  
space  
here  
in  
America  
today  
then  
you  
will  
be  
once  
step  
closer  
to  
a  
visit  
from  
the  
FBI  
or  
a  
secret  
service  
agent  
and  
they  
will  
not  
be  
providing  
the  
hot,  
delicious  
coffee.

## PAPER SMEARS

i have left the leaflets  
of paper behind,  
but i don't see the  
trees smiling or waving at me  
in frequencies that are any different  
than they were before.

in fact,  
it may just be a more hostile now  
as i stand with my voice recorder  
telling some anonymous hole about what  
i'm thinking or want to write down  
before it leaves my brain to get  
dangled into the upper reaches of  
some tree that is peering down through  
the slices of branch to get a good view of me.

all of my paper in the house  
leans in farther as well  
to get a better look at the trader that will  
no longer validate the lumberjacks life  
and give them the needed tattooing they have  
been cut down to deserve.

instead,  
i'm swishing around with my eco friendly  
bones talking softly into a gray slip of  
plastic that will replace all the frenetic  
scribbles and eraser bits that used to  
smile in heaps of refuse.

now,  
all i do is slip a new battery in the cartridge  
like loading the barrel of a new gun,  
and pull the trigger as though i'm going to  
show the pen who is finally boss as my voice  
trails off into some idea  
the pages lying around can barely pick up  
in all their blank,  
and lonely space.

## PLIGHT OF THE PLUTONIANS

i think  
the plutonians  
should unanimously  
rule that earth is not  
a planet.

they should throw parades  
and surprise parties on  
their cold hunk of planet  
proclaiming their  
ignorance of the planet  
'earth'.

in several generations from  
now,  
the plutonians could completely  
forget that earth was ever a planet  
huddled  
next to the adorable red mars moment.

the rationale would be easy -  
the earthlings are dumb people  
that decides on whims to either include  
or exclude whomever they like.

in return, the plutonians  
send their love as the  
saturanians consider such  
a bold move to send a message  
to earthlings that the categorical  
inclusion of planetary bodies  
is not some hasty decision that  
needs to be repealed.

as the tears of clyde tombough  
sprinkle down from the clouds on  
some anonymous rainy day,  
the shifting lights of pluto  
scream in celebration because  
they won't have to deal with  
any of us earth people in our  
blue planet ways  
anymore.

## **pops ballad**

if  
my  
dad  
doesn't  
go  
down  
as  
the  
back  
alley,  
post-italian renaissance  
used car  
salesman  
genius  
with  
a penchant  
for  
hiding  
his  
intelligence  
behind  
used  
whiskey  
breath  
and  
bill  
paying,  
then  
i'm not  
sure  
if  
i  
have  
a  
handle  
on  
much  
in  
this  
life.

## **post mortem**

people  
are  
likely  
cremated  
because  
they  
have  
an  
deep,  
hidden  
subconscious  
fear  
of  
reverse  
heights.

## PRE-HISTORIC HARVEST

as my eyes adjusted over  
a mound of used clothes,  
dirtied dishes,  
torn papers,  
used mail  
and other assorted  
home articles of familiarity,  
i unexpectantly caught hold  
of a pre-historic dinosaur  
lurched on its side in the middle of  
the floor.

and my brain thought,  
'HOLY SHIT, THE CATS FINALLY  
WENT BACK IN TIME AND PULLED BACK A  
TINY DINOSAUR FROM THE STEVEN SPEILBERG  
DREAM AND NOW WE ARE STUCK WITH A FUCKING  
JURASSIC PARK IN OUR OWN BASEMENT.'

then,  
my eyes landed on an old,  
mysterious toy chest by the dead TV  
in the corner with remnants and tufts  
of cat hair littering the floor  
and it was complete.

when these cat's meow and squeal to come  
in at night to rest their nocturnal bones,  
they are really gearing up for another  
trip through the wormhole into their 4th or 7th life.

but,  
this time they were sloppy.

their mysterious lives finally screwed up and  
brought back an actual dinosaur specimen.

as i approached the small dead carcass,  
i thought about how cool our 8-year old zen boy would  
love this and how we had to hide it from the media  
lest they turn our tattered home into an ET infestation  
of plastic walls.

and as my hand softly grabbed onto what was to be  
a fleshed, miniature throwback to the early years,  
i found it to be just a plastic toy.

all my dreams gone.

just another toy our 8-year old already saw and  
discarded because it wasn't enthralling enough.

at this,

i slumped a bit  
and walked defeated past other stacks of  
hidden plastic dinosaurs hidden around  
the big,  
empty room.



## **present participle**

cut  
off  
from  
now  
and  
become  
the  
future  
if  
you  
wanna  
salvage  
anything,  
OK?

## RELIGIOUS QUESTION?

while  
we  
endure  
death  
after  
mutilation  
over  
all  
these  
political  
jargon  
terms  
and  
treaties  
and  
municipalities,  
i  
suggest  
that  
we  
all  
take  
a  
break  
from  
the bombs  
and  
try  
to figure  
out  
this  
tiny,  
but  
big  
thought  
known  
as  
religion.

## ROBOT BABY

the amazingly  
wound,  
tearing,  
running miles baby  
moves  
so much  
and with such  
sloppy precision  
that i sometimes grab  
his body  
and inspect if for computer circuitry.

wondering if he is a real  
flesh human,  
while listening to his tiny bird heart  
slam up and down and up and down,  
i wonder where they hid all the  
electrical pieces of his constant motion  
and eternal curiosity in everything  
that surrounds us all.

as the night winds down into  
a snit of another sleeping slumber,  
i hold him next to my chest and  
feel his soft,  
sleep addled breathing and realize  
that he is all human  
as the diodes of electricity flicker  
around the room  
as a TV voice says,  
'you're not gonna believe this next story .. '

**satin sounds**

**a lot like satan**

and feels like saturn

as the salacious

steaks slither towards

the fire

and winks at all the

demons making extra

cords of satin for

satan

perched in his ice pit

looking for the

television remote control.

### **silvery slug paths**

i always know  
that the night  
before  
was a good one  
for the insect  
world  
as  
i  
trace  
through the silvery  
tracks  
of  
slug  
paths on our  
blue golf carpet  
in the basement.

it's a filmy silver  
that looks as though a roll  
of flim came to life  
and rolled around in a bed of  
developer and hopped off into  
someone else's rotating projector  
to relive a night of drunken  
development.

and all i see are these trails  
with not a trace of where this slug may  
have slid to becuase the carpet ends  
where the cement begins and the day  
just inches closer  
and closer  
to our next  
proverbial evening  
togheter,  
baby.

## **story of flickers**

the  
end  
of  
a  
brief  
hymn  
comes  
to  
a  
slow  
end  
as  
friends  
fail  
to  
respond  
and  
just  
quickly  
fade,  
fade  
away.

## the 27 lives around us

a woman  
came to my door a bit  
back and asked if  
a gray cat on our steps  
was indeed our cat.

i answered 'yes'.

then,  
she asked if it had all  
its shots  
and i said,  
'yes & why?'

she said that a neighbor of her's  
up the street was bit by this  
cat and wanted to ensure  
that her arm was not going to  
get coated with filth and fall off.

i assured her that her arm  
would be fine  
as i peered at her pleading face,  
then to the serene cat licking his haunches  
while the traffic roared by in a blur.

and i was thinking that this is the  
final straw with these cats.

after all the days of feeding,  
watering,  
shit picking up,  
vomit extraction,  
general maneuvering in and out,  
and all the other perfunctory joys  
that are now just flat work for something  
much bigger than the enjoyment garnered,  
i shook my head and wondered if this woman  
wanted 3 more cats.

instead of asking her,  
i apologized and realized  
that collectively,  
these cats have 27 lives to go  
no matter what happens here  
in this neighborhood  
and that's a whole lot of shots  
no matter how you bite  
into that nip.

## THE ALMOST COFFEE

i was on time  
for work,  
in fact i was a bit  
ahead of schedule as  
a big truck with an additional  
trailer on the back carrying lawnmowers and  
rakes pulled out in front of me  
as the packed group of mexican fellas bumped in  
unison and i figured it was just as well  
they pull out in front of me  
and i started smiling right along  
as the trailer hit a big,  
final bump on the way out and  
a huge mug of coffee tipped over and spilled  
all over the street  
and suddenly my smile went away and  
i felt a bit sad for the bastard that  
didn't have enough coffee to keep that  
mug teetering on the back of  
that unbalanced morning beam.



## **the broken**

street light lamp  
in the dollar general  
parking lot  
will never get fixed becuse  
they don't make a ladder  
tall enough in that  
enormously crowded store  
and the management has decided  
that if they cannot  
sell it,  
then it just won't be  
fixed  
as a pack of black birds  
sit aloft that broken hunk of  
expired light and  
wonder when our bulbs are ever  
going to flare  
up all bright and loud  
from  
the ground we occupy.

## **the city finally sleeps**

as the restless run  
off to create their own  
cities made of  
translucent beams,  
hologram poles and  
everything vaporized to ensure that  
nothing needs maintenance.

it's new york city caught  
in a parisian nap,  
and it's london wrapped in a sleeping  
bag trying to beat back the sunlight  
becuase morning just doesn't mean eggs  
and orange juice, baby.

my small baby sleeps next to me now  
as the city finally wrestles up a bit  
more from it's very brief slumber  
to do it all over again,  
and do it all over again  
as the waxy record spins faster,  
and faster to the next tune  
drawling on the same volume  
with no where to go  
but  
around and around  
once  
again.

## the end, my friend?

if those  
crazy  
end of the world  
religious sects  
wanna come out  
and proclaim that  
the book of revelations is  
unfolding before our 3-D eye balls,  
and the scent of the devil is near,  
or the spokes of light from clouds  
are the horses of jesus breathing his  
cloak on back to earth,  
it's about time to do it now.

instead of hiding for the next best  
opportunity to do it,  
i think they should shove out of their  
blasted rooms and dank hovels  
and start shouting from the Sinai in their hearts  
that everyone needs to buy some bottled water  
and a new passport because the mayhem is  
gonna come sooner than later.

with shaved heads and long locks,  
i want them to storm political rallies,  
large city parades,  
the floors of wall street brokers,  
school houses in vermont,  
on the floor on my room i sit in now and  
scream that our time is up and the  
lips of god conveyed that coveted message  
to their wild eyed ears waiting for the  
blood of truth.

and then,  
oh then,  
in our media sizzled world we can  
let everyone know so that we  
can wait obediently,  
with all our sins gone,  
in our best cloth,  
clean breath,  
polished shows,  
new hose,  
cleaned brains,  
just waiting for the blast of  
miracled light to wash us all off  
this show in one huge  
rapturous moment that  
will surely  
not make  
tomorrow's  
earth headline.

## **the next 9/11 & civil rights fight**

as we climbed the elevator  
to the top of an ACLU auction  
i had a painting in,  
he described a story recanted from  
a fella he works with at  
the FAA about how in the ensuing  
week there was gonna be another  
bigger sept. 11th that would  
ring in the official militarization  
of this USA.

following that,  
i was cramped in a ritzy skyline building  
eating off the hedge of capitalism  
as radio show hosts and closet rich folk  
spoke of the horror of this current  
governmental administration  
and during that blur,  
i forgot about the next 9/11.

3 days later,  
there were reports in the news  
that an enormous terrorist plot was  
busted up in london  
and there were further decrees that  
our government friends were protecting us  
from the evil octopus as spider man leaned  
back in bed,  
cigarette lit,  
jane getting up for a drink,  
our hero spreading rings of victory over  
our fiction addled brains.

**the roar of VVVVVVVVVV ..**

it's sunday afternoon,  
just before 1:15 and all day long i've  
heard the faint rustle of  
"V-V"

that constant whirl of beating back  
fall leaves and cleaning the suburbs  
for city visitors.

on and on,  
it's very faint,  
but persistent and it you cannot  
shake sounds,  
the plowing of the incessant 'VVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVV'  
could  
take you to places that  
would  
suck the air out of your bones.

and now i'm a part of that club.

i got the powerful,  
calming charm of the leave blower.

used it yesterday for the first time  
and finally understand the power of the  
'VVVVVVVV ..'

## THE SMALL ASIANS

my wife's brother  
married a small  
mail order indonesian  
girl that is  
a real perky,  
happy woman  
by the name of  
'joy'.

in all her  
appropriate nameness,  
i marvel at how small  
she is.

barely over four foot nine or so,  
and when she carries our little miles,  
i see how small she really is.

then,  
i wonder if she will ever grow?

well into her 30's or so,  
and i am waiting for her to nail  
some huge growth spurt and surprise  
nature by adding a foot onto her frame.

that would be wondrous to see  
someone small like her just explode  
to a new height and weight and throw  
that whole return postage thing  
into utter and sheer havoc.

## **the teeter tottering**

of our  
2006 lives  
with  
new wars,  
and grand new  
underground  
nuclear blasts.

still stuck  
in a room of  
invisible mouths  
proclaiming edicts  
of  
war as the march of  
peace becomes something of a  
myth  
that was seriously pursued 40 years ago  
or so.

and i hit that bubble of wisdom  
last night that i wanna let all of it go.

if i cannot bend my vote,  
or march the streets more valiantly,  
then i need to fade out the political flicker  
and dedicate myself to things i know work.

such as  
bill paying,  
marriage,  
fatherhood,  
writing,  
doodling,  
fixing my cars,  
sweeping the floor,  
laughing with the fools.

none of these political plays of  
dialogue trips  
ever worked.

sure,  
you get the assured nod from  
an like minded one,  
and the ire or opposition,  
but what does it do?

after all the years of studying history,  
and living this current history,  
you realize why the emphasis on  
shows about nothing,  
and the activities that lead to something  
lead folks to ditch politics.

i'm gonna join that smoking circle  
and gladly put that but in mouth,  
and light up the torch of  
leaving one glad mound of  
thought that just won't miss  
me  
all  
that much.



## **the trouble with poems**

is that they are  
troublesome  
and when that winced face of  
pale confusion  
comes up to you after  
reading shakespeare and  
recovering from antiquated english  
and not enough sleep,  
it's hard to get the regular  
mind back on the boat  
as the other voices of  
poetic reason flit in metaphorical precision  
while the needle smiles over the quilt  
and the next hopeful stitch  
is going to be a wet fold in your  
brain that finally  
grasps the notion  
that poetry  
is  
real simple,  
like an invisible lobotomy  
taking place about  
right now  
in your left temporal  
lobe.

## THERAPY TIME

i  
will never  
be able to  
comprehend  
the  
depths  
of how  
my  
wife  
has to endure  
most  
all of the  
therapy  
sessions  
for our  
small 2-year old  
miles  
boy  
as he  
teeters on  
the edge of  
being 'normal'  
on the mt. everest curve chart.

when  
i come  
home later at night,  
or spend more time  
with miles on  
the weekends  
and witness those tiny  
hands signing what  
he wants,  
or the practice of  
doing needed therapeutic  
activities  
i realize  
all the work  
eventually  
pays off  
as the glint  
of forever  
refracts off  
his eye  
ball towards  
the  
direction  
of  
his  
monolithic  
mother  
that  
will

one  
day  
see  
that  
everything means  
everything  
in  
due  
time.

## TINTED WINDOW POEM

i wonder  
about the people  
who have to have all  
their windows  
tinted  
and how  
they think  
they are getting  
away with whatever  
they are getting  
away with.

most of these  
people are likely  
jerks and  
when they  
flip off their  
innocent subjects,  
no one can see them.

maybe they tint up  
to have more privacy  
when they wanna  
pick their nose loose.

perhaps these are  
the sex addicts that  
want the utter  
privacy of flying peripherals  
and smooth blow jobs without  
the petty annoyance of  
passing motorist eyes.

or maybe they are just  
a bunch of people that want  
a bunch more people to wonder  
what's going on behind  
that veil  
of expensive glass coating  
that  
gives them the attention  
that stepping out  
of the car will  
never afford them.

## **used labels**

the damned lot  
of a used label is  
on that is a glorious march  
through this label addled life.

stuck on things for years,  
and years and years,  
it has the sticking power to age gracefully  
as we reminisce what has taken its place,  
and how good it was in its day.

it's the inanimate baby as  
the teenager looks on in wonder  
as if they were never a baby to begin with.

but the label on the mustards,  
pickles,  
gas cans,  
washing machines,  
clothes tags,  
insides of shoes,  
just hand with rife tenacity as  
though the world will never forget  
that they have a label worth remembering.

then,  
the day comes that they get shipped to the thrift store,  
trash can,  
fire heap,  
trash landfill  
and their label get trounced down  
into nothingness.

the coffin  
of magnificance,  
the soldier's medal that  
is constantly reincarnated down  
every capitalistic aisle of  
this label  
soaked  
land.

## VALIDATION

the resting of my 2-year old  
miles on the legs of my lap  
as my hand slowly goes over  
his skin and hair  
is the most redeeming moment  
of them all as  
every memory of strain,  
growth into manhood,  
being broke,  
enduring the natural flow of pain  
as he quickly shoots his head up into  
my direction and gives me the  
most astounding smile i have seen  
from something that small and innocent  
and again life feels  
slow and melodic as though it was made  
for each and every one of us.

## wagging babies

one of  
the  
best jolts of  
enjoyment  
i can think of is  
to watch all the  
wagging tails of  
goats  
at a petting  
farm  
and the smiling faces  
of babies.

to toggle from  
ecstatic face  
to rapidly swishing tail,  
is  
enough to  
preserve the  
glow of childhood  
deep within  
the  
red blood  
of my pulpy  
existence.

## WELL NOURISHED HOMELESS WOMAN

I

notice  
this one  
wind burned  
homeless woman  
that consistently  
looks over tanned  
and undernourished,  
but she  
always has a sack  
of food,  
big drink in hand,  
fresh cigarettes in the  
top brim of her  
front pocket.

other times,  
i notice her panhandling  
up by the grocery store  
or just off the highway  
and wonder if she gets  
enough to buy her cheap  
hooch at the local liquor  
mart.

she must be making a mint  
in her tax free outfit  
as the burgers go down  
smooth,  
the drink stays full  
and the  
smoke leaving her mouth  
makes her look like the  
heroic dragon saving earth  
3 minutes before the  
white blocky letters  
start ascending upward  
on the black,  
blank screen.



**work,**

work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,work,

work,

all the time work

so

much

that

i forget

how

to

spell

the

world

..

uh,

what

is

it?

uh,

oh yea,

(relax in tightly woven parentheses.)

## work phone

i  
love the way  
my wife  
answers her work phone.

it's one of those old  
rectangle style  
pieces with the  
big circle mouthpiece  
for extra wordage.

and it emits  
the original ring  
a phone has since forgot  
in our subway shuffle  
across  
a four minute mile pace.

and when i call her  
at her desk in the  
basement at the university,  
she zings that phone up before  
the end of one ring  
and the tinny reverberations  
of anticipation,  
quickness keep me silent  
a moment before speaking.

and quickly,  
she tells me who she is  
as the reverberation ends  
and i marvel  
at the quickness,  
the attention of a  
shiny coffee bean looking  
for a good mug  
to vacation in.

and  
as the conversation ends,  
i want to call again,  
and again,  
and again  
to relish the old,  
dying phone sounds  
and to  
hear her pretty hands  
pluck  
up a stranger as though  
the sound of  
faint echoes  
is  
the lost song

of the gods.

## 1 Woman Vs. 12 Balls

as if my  
wife isn't collided with  
the mirth of balls constantly.

it's 3 human boys,  
3 human cats,  
versus one woman.

then,  
there are the actual boy  
bouncing balls that get lodged into  
living rooms,  
hallways,  
surfaces that smack  
a ball hard when all you need  
is an envelope of silence to mail off.

we know have a big purple ball  
that flies around the house  
like it's on a smithsonian tour  
teaching the importance of science  
to the masses.

and the other morning,  
while my wife was garnering the last  
of calm, babyless sleep,  
i heard from an open window  
a non-stop melding of plastic into  
wood  
over and over,  
the smash,  
bang,  
bounce  
of noise  
and  
suddenly  
she announced,  
'STOP IT!'

and everything finally  
fell peculiarly silent.

alone with our balls,  
scratching for a way to make quiet noise,  
all us males shuffled a bit ashamed  
for all the noise  
our damn balls make.

## 300 & BELOW

you  
know  
that you  
have evolved  
into  
another sort  
of  
reality  
that is  
hard  
to describe  
to  
your  
remaining  
single friends  
when  
a  
small daily  
victory  
is calling  
the hospital  
for your  
son's medical  
tests and to know  
that  
the  
final  
tally after  
all the thousands  
of  
dollars  
have  
been evaporated  
from the insurer's  
magic  
wand  
and  
the  
final  
tally  
is  
below  
300 bucks.

## A MEAT TALE

i remember  
a very hot  
summer night  
recently  
when i had finished  
a hard day at work,  
did grocery store  
shopping for taco sundries,  
got home and started  
to lay out my arsenal  
when i discovered that  
i left the most important  
ingredient at  
the store.

the meat.

before that,  
i pawed through the car,  
and every crevice in the kitchen  
before admitting mental defeat  
and sauntered like a loser  
out to my car  
to see how far i could stretch  
my silly putty day without  
losing the loose etchings of my neck.

as i sailed quickly over mounds  
of road,  
tore back into the store,  
the nice woman at the registered  
smiled and said  
she was sorry.

i told her there was nothing  
to be sorry about as i grabbed  
that plastic bag of meat as though  
it was my first born  
as i rushed home to be with my  
first born as the slowly approaching  
sound of burning meat singed through  
my tired,  
forgetful brain.

## ALIEN HYGIENE

older age,  
poor diet at times,  
liquor,  
corn nuts,  
too much orange juice  
and odd fits of  
manual labor  
have turned both of my  
big toenails into  
alien pod  
calcium corroded  
nail ports.

they seethe with spider webs  
of white exaggeration  
as though they want to run  
from the bottom of my  
nail straight out  
of my male body.

there are other moon slivers  
that hangs on the end in  
pockets of dead weight  
that begs for my brief attention  
to ward off any of the alien  
residue that is contemplating  
a take over of the middle inside  
toes until  
they have a complete  
handle on both of my feet.

at that point,  
they can begin constructing their  
foot ship with toe pulleys and  
yank my unknowing body straight into  
the dark space bubble to teach  
me a lesson on  
general  
earthy hygiene.

## ANATOMY OF SIGNAGE

i see  
several dudes  
in the dead  
cold  
hoisting '\$5 pizza'  
signs to passing  
traffic  
as the dart back and  
forth like  
pigeons in  
front of an  
old protestant church.

all the feelings  
of old come back  
and i  
wanna jerk my car  
into some craft or  
junk store,  
buy some signs,  
buy some sticks,  
get some big markers  
and make my  
own signs.

instead,  
mine would just say  
stuff like,  
'HONK IF YOU LOVE PICKLES'  
'ENJOY THE WIND!'  
'LOVE YOUR DONKEY'

and just waltz up and down  
the concrete strip  
with time  
melting away  
as if  
all  
of this  
buying and selling  
really means anything at  
all.



## **balls a swingin'**

the funniest moment  
we experienced when i was a  
kid was some random day we  
were hanging out at the mall.

after pawning through the aisles  
for an hour or so  
looking fruitlessly for girls,  
errant change and  
another video arcade,  
we came to one end of the mall  
to see a mob of girls jumping and squealing at  
the set of exit doors.

as we clamored up to the window to look  
out,  
we saw nothing but the sparse movement of  
afternoon mall traffic,  
gleaming sun off newly washed car metal,  
and anonymous bodies drifting towards entrances.

we asked what all the hubbub was about  
and the girls said,  
'THAT OLD MAN'S BALLS ARE HANGING OUT OF HIS SHORTS.'

naw,  
we thought,  
where the hell is he at.

'HE'S WALKING IN CIRCLES AROUND THE LOT,  
HE'LL BE AROUND HERE IN A MINUTE.'

at this,  
my friend and i went outside for front row  
seats and a better look at what we assumed  
to be a load of shit.

as this man in gray shorts rounded the corner  
on the far end,  
we saw this faint smudge of pink around where his  
leg and shorts met,  
not thinking much of it.

as he approached,

something was jiggling down there.

as he came closer,  
he had an old sonny tape deck on his ears,  
sunglasses and was flashing a broad lottery winner smile  
while his old shriveled fells just waggled there in  
the 1980's sunlight.

he didn't give a shit one way or another.

we thought about telling this poor guy about  
his dick hanging out of his shorts,  
but decided that he would have ultimately have liked  
it if a pack of girls were watching his usually hidden  
and neglected old man balls stride proudly  
in that summer parking lot  
of hope and triumph.

## BEHIND SLOWNESS

my  
recent  
penchant  
for  
getting  
behind  
all  
the  
slowest  
drivers  
when coming  
or going  
to work  
is  
likely  
karmic  
residue  
for  
my  
need  
to  
speed  
and  
whiz  
every  
fucking  
place  
i  
go  
just to  
shave  
off bits  
of  
numbers on  
the  
clock face  
only  
to  
reminisce  
about  
all  
of  
those  
butchered  
numbers  
as  
the  
gray  
heads bobble  
around  
the  
thick air inside  
that

wobbly,  
slow  
car  
i  
am  
slithering  
behind.

## BONO

my wife's  
best friend from  
los angeles  
recently got a chance  
to eat with Bono  
and his wife  
got  
real,  
real  
mad  
about it because  
she  
is  
a real competitive  
sort of girl.

and the whole time  
my brain  
kept wondering,  
'how boring would a conversation  
be with someone like bono?'

come on.

what are you going to ask  
him that would be unique enough  
for him not to roil in confusion  
and wish for fire over  
water in his cup.

so,  
you gonna ask him about touring,  
being the torch for african aid,  
eating steaks,  
cheating on his wife,  
how he likes ireland?

come on.

it would be more interesting  
to talk to the dental assistant  
over a root canal than to have  
to borrough into a blank conversation  
with a celebrity type that cannot  
even take his own life seriously  
enough than to take yours  
seriously.

instead of getting snooty about  
it,  
i think she should relish the  
fact that each day she gets to  
have a conversation with someone

that both gives a shit and  
provides genuine answers,  
not to mention  
made a wedding vow  
for the remainder of her life.

## counting upward & on

if there is anything  
that makes you believe  
that your life is coming  
down to a quick, sudden  
jerk of useless activity,  
it has to be sitting in  
business meetings with  
business faces  
and vapid concentration  
that coffee cannot jump kick.

and my patience level  
for this kind of  
slow death has come to  
an end.

several months back i started  
writing down numbers in big arcs  
around a paper that was passed around  
i went from 1 to 100 in about a minute and  
a half forgetting quickly that my mortality  
was ever a part of this  
confounding meeting of strangers.

then, i hit 200 and started really  
enjoying this time away from my desk  
and the anonymous vocal sounds of one  
human going and going and going as  
i reached 237 and hit my stride,  
i was running out of white space on this  
8.5 inch x 5.5 inch slice of pulp.

now was the time to buckle further down  
and find some more white space  
as the pen flicked on past 258 and straight  
towards 300 as the best janitor in the  
school district looked over my shoulder  
several times  
with mouth slight agape,  
and he was losing meeting focus.

'you have issues, man,'  
he said with humor and seriousness.

as i stopped at 289,  
i said,  
'i know that'  
and went right on to 300  
and beyond  
as my life again  
became  
something worth counting on.



## DESTINED TO BE GOOD

was walt disney  
really good  
at other things  
besides  
animating  
mice and  
ducks?

is the pope  
really good at other  
things beside oratory  
in front of  
many people  
to defend his faith?

was babe ruth a better  
gamble than a baseball  
player?

was bill clinton  
better equipped to run  
a cat house in nevada  
than running the  
entire sexually confused  
country?

do many people we  
come to know do many more  
than one thing really well  
and just fall into their  
big, fat craft?

or are these people just luck?

or did they fall into  
something that made sense one  
day and money the next?

i wonder about these people  
as they wonder about themselves  
and we continue to vortex  
into wonderment as the next  
big thing for all of us  
to adore  
starts to spin the middle  
of austin, texas.

## DIGITAL BREATH

i never thought  
i would  
get to this  
juncture in my existence  
where i would have  
blinked away all the old  
school tendencies of  
creation.

most of my surroundings are  
full of digital  
hum.

the camera,  
phone,  
voice recorded,  
videos,  
and roving flash drives  
have replaced  
old  
35MM film canisters,  
slips of paper,  
the 8MM film and such.

my renaissance has  
come full circle and i  
have eaten my way to the  
pinnacle of the digital  
food chain,  
just waiting to be knocked off  
my hedge so that i can  
take a picture of my fall  
with an old pentax k1000  
and scribble my remembrances  
on some old,  
dusty journal tucked next  
to the batteries in my  
techno digital bag.

## **don kahan**

those local car dealership  
commercial guys get jammed  
into my brain with the deadpan humor,  
hideous jingles,  
and absurd proclamations and won't  
let go.

i never buy cars,  
rarely ever think about buy cars,  
and surely wouldn't consider these  
bozo boys jamming their bread into  
my peanut butter,  
but it happens every time.

now,  
i cannot get the jingle,  
'WHAT'S THAT GUY'S NAME. OH, DON KAHAN.'

and at that point,  
the superfluous hex has been donned into  
my scalp to set the torturous grinding  
wheel to tear through my wet pulp brain.

i jingle the words 'DON KAHAN' throughout  
my head as the image of his bald headed, bearded face  
comes popping up through my television brain  
into a real important thought  
that will be forgotten because i  
couldn't just walk away from .. uh, that one guy ..

OH YEA,  
DON FUCKING KAHAN.

don motherfucking kahan.

## Dreaming of Buddha

i had a dream  
last  
night  
that i donated my  
red, fake ivory Buddha  
statue to some  
locale  
and lost  
my  
way completely.

when i got the  
statuette in a  
small korean market,  
they warned that i  
could  
never bring it back  
for a refund.

it was bad luck  
and they flashed a grave  
countenance  
that bespoke of  
fire skies and  
blood lakes.

so,  
i tossed away the  
receipt and  
huddled it next to my computer  
monitor for all  
these 10 years of so  
i have  
pounded through  
these years  
of words  
trickling  
like a palatable  
matrix  
i  
forget continually.

and  
it was that one  
small  
dream  
with the big man statue  
leaving my grasp  
for another  
location.

i don't  
even know where

to get it back  
in my dreamland  
when i fall back  
asleep.

but the beauty of this,  
is that i'm awake  
and he sits to my left  
with his  
relaxed fingers,  
full grin  
and  
another dreamless day  
to watch everything pass  
with his  
closed eyes  
and lightly strewn  
gown.

## Earth vs. Fantasy

when earth and  
all these mettlings of  
ours become rather bored,  
and used,  
i think of all the  
fast hovering ufo's  
and unfound islands  
we pass over on our planet.

maybe all the tiny alien  
people are smart enough to  
pass our inhabited islands  
and densely parched lands  
to rove the new lands.

perhaps that smash into  
unmonitored waters  
with their gill eyes  
and go straight to the  
bottom of the ocean  
to erect their  
special world away  
from earthen eyes.

and maybe the secrets  
to everything we need  
to make us whole,  
and succinct,  
are tucked away in those  
unknown events and lands  
that make  
the best entertainment art.

or maybe this is hogwash  
and you should finish  
that load of dishes  
by the radio as  
the reporter woman  
talks about 'dow jones'  
and  
hurricane hal.

## **everyone in this town**

is waiting for something to happen  
as something does happen in  
other towns.

the eyes of passing strangers  
strain to peer beneath the surface,  
but the surface is so strong that  
nothing within the mantle will have  
a chance to be discovered as  
the dolphins flip some more  
water into the gulf air.

and as the feet shuffle on by me  
in the middle of a huge mart,  
i wonder if people really know how  
far a foot can carry a load  
or how much strength is in one pinkie  
toe as the tide recoils and looks  
for more bits of california gold.

then i hit that convenient wall  
again that we are really lucky to  
be wherever we are destined to be  
because the kids still laugh  
and the old women still yearn.

and while i take another picture of  
an early morning splash of light over a bough  
of spider webbing,  
i realize that this would happen the same  
way anywhere else  
and i really do love this town no matter how  
long i have to resist the urge to  
be silent and just  
wait like the rest of us looking  
further and further into the moon's shades of  
gray for something more than here  
and beyond our idea of space.

## EXISTENTIAL EXISTENCE

at times  
my wife and i  
give each other  
that  
slight,  
pained look  
because  
we realize  
that  
we ultimately don't  
exist anymore.

sure,  
we do in our own reality,  
in our bartered slices away from  
work and toil  
to flit in our individuality,  
but our kids have  
replaced what we once were.

again,  
you can come up to us,  
poke our skin,  
flick our well covered bones,  
but it's not us there.

not really.

but,  
if you go up and do the  
same thing to our kids,  
the look in their eyes  
and the actions from their bodies  
are the collective lives  
that we have given away  
to deal with this world.

so, if you call and we don't  
answer,  
you have been forewarned that  
we are not here anymore  
and your best bet is to talk  
to the kids because that's where  
are voices lie,  
where our breath escapes.



## **fart teacher**

an elementary school  
art teacher  
came in the bathroom next  
to me the other day  
and starting ripping  
the hell out of the air.

all the while,  
he was keeping the tempo of our  
conversation fresh,  
and arid.

as he let out several more series  
of flatulent rounds of applause,  
i flushed,  
he walked out the door  
and i  
came  
to the firm notion that this  
man is no longer the school  
art teacher,  
but the newly anointed  
fart teacher.

## fire girl

came home  
the other day  
for a sandwich  
after they unclogged  
the street  
of fire trucks,  
ambulances,  
swirling cherry tops  
of cop cars.

drove by a house about  
5 up the way  
and saw the burnt remains of  
a house fire and every  
news truck in town  
punching satellites  
into the sky to  
let us all know how  
it went down.

and on the corner,  
across from the burnt brown home,  
there was a small, skinny black  
girl about 10 or 11  
leaning into a stack of microphones  
dotting the front of  
her starry eyes.

and the story was still unclear.

did she start the fire?

did she see the fire and call the 911?

was she just someone that they think is involved?

it was unsolved.

then,  
later that night,  
i found out that she rescued 4 of her brothers and sisters  
while her cop dad was at work.

guess the kids started the fire,  
and this little girl pulled on her  
hero britches and saved the day.

each time i pass with boards covering the windows,  
smoke damaged siding,  
i see the sparkled innocence  
of that girl's interviewing face  
glow on that cloudy day  
and know she grew over a foot

in about one day  
and all the kids  
at school would be  
surprised.

## FLICKING

the  
old  
riding  
mower  
dude  
keeps  
kicking  
up  
rocks  
at  
passing  
motorists  
and  
i  
was  
so  
inspired  
by  
this  
that  
i  
wanted  
to  
go  
back  
with  
a  
body of  
amour,  
goggles  
and  
hold  
up  
pieces of  
paper  
so  
that  
the  
rocks  
could  
smash  
through  
my  
corpulent  
pages  
and  
etch  
out  
a  
braille  
poem  
that  
would

make  
so  
much  
sense  
to  
a  
blind  
person  
that  
maybe  
you  
all  
could  
see  
what  
a  
poem  
actually  
feels  
like.

## FORGETFUL AND ABSENT MINDED

i used to be  
absent minded.

now,  
i just forget  
things.

leave things behind.

don't recall reminders  
or important bits of conversations.

and these thoughts on the page  
make it worse because i can  
remember these things long enough  
to etch out tiny epitaphs of my  
living that help me paw  
through the poetic notions  
that has led to this exact moment  
in my life.

but,  
it has got me that much closer to understanding  
what an alzheimer's patient has to endure  
day after day.

the loss,  
the robbed gains,  
the forgetting of any loss,  
the nadir of going around in a circle  
on a diamond path.

and now,  
i am trying to actively  
remember,  
and keep the glue between my brain  
folds sticky so that if those  
little fly nuggets of my life come  
tickling with their bug feet,  
my gluey folds can suck them down  
like a venus fly trap to keep them  
there for as long as they will  
lie there in the  
conviction  
of  
my brain head.

**fuck,**  
sometimes  
is all you need to say,  
fuck.

i feel like  
saying fuck  
right now.

that's all that's  
going through  
my head.

fuck.

sure,  
sure,  
there are so many  
other words i could  
use to think about  
what i'm thinking about  
but i love the hard lines  
and delicate curves of  
the fuck.

and fuck is where i'm at.

what the fuck, eh?

## GAS STATION CASH

each day i go  
by that dirtied up gas station  
where a dude was gunned down with over  
11 gun shots while his kid sat in  
the back seat  
and watch  
people  
gas their cars up over the exact spot  
we saw that broken white pick up truck  
on that hazy saturday when everyone  
was gathered around wondering who was next,  
i think that we  
is a planet of transparent moments  
that goes gliding by like panes of mirrored  
glass that move very quickly  
just giving you enough time to catch a reflection  
and move on into the next moment  
as the meaning of life becomes something  
that you will contemplate when you have  
time as the cleaner company comes out with  
industrial solvents to clean up the blood over  
that gassy,  
concrete slab that will  
continue to make  
more and  
more  
money.



## **gel = leg**

if i shake my  
bottle of gel upside  
down and focus  
real hard,  
it suddenly says 'leg'  
and i lose  
focus and  
my hand slips a bit east  
and the glop of  
gel hits my leg  
and i  
look in worry at my leg  
as though  
someone may think something else  
may have really happened  
as i check that my zipper fly is closed up  
and reach for the  
crisp,  
newly washed towel on  
the rack.

## **hovering, delicious time**

there  
will never come a time  
when i don't romanticize more time.

just unused squares of  
seconds that i can  
dream through like  
the wicks of fireworks  
i stare at with  
a full box of matches in hand  
and the smell of tomorrow  
stuck in my future.

i could write that book or  
two that would introduce the next  
big idea or craze,  
i could simply make some good lovin'  
to my wife in the middle of the day,  
i could take the kids to a strange  
swimming pool,  
i could listen to the thunderous  
cat purr beside my still ear.

i could do almost anything  
with that fabled mount of time  
that wants me less than i want  
it,  
which is why i'm here trying to  
wave my invisible wand in  
it's direction with these  
downward descending words  
sinking  
further,  
slowly  
down  
into  
less  
and  
less  
overall  
time.

## **i have given up on TV**

because of my  
bounding ball of  
maneuvers and sounds know  
as our 22-month old miles boy.

all he has to do is  
amble with his unsteady gait,  
chirp like a lost dinosaur,  
let out a long blast of pre sleep yawn,  
lurch loud verbal phrases  
and that's not courting for his  
dangerous movements.

those darts and dashes  
that leave gashes between his eyes,  
bruises underneath eyes,  
scrapes on hand palms,  
errant bruises about his legs.

looks like he got pummeled on  
some waterpark adventure,  
but all his did was amble around the  
house and anywhere else we take him.

he reminds me of that big, tart  
bumble bee that lazily float along a  
humid summer air swirl,  
but suddenly swipes in as though  
he knows exactly what he's doing.

amazed by his amazement,  
i have lumps and bruises and scrapes trying  
to keep up with the modern marvel of  
my human anthology.

it's another item no one warned me about.

i had to have baby to finally get over TV.

instead of TV now,  
i think more about health insurance  
as little miles goes stepping over a big  
concrete step  
heading towards another stack of  
rock in the back yard just swimming in the  
temperate air as though they  
are all fish.

## **i have the missing clown nose**

by my desk at  
work and i won't let go of it.

you can send your ransom notes,  
threatened to garnish wages,  
tell the cops,  
call the feds,  
but none of this will make a bit of difference.

the red nose is mine just  
in case i need to get into my stage face  
and clown around the god damned town of ours.

so,  
you can just move on with your clown smile,  
big floppy shoes,  
loose costume clothes and  
find another place  
to nose around.

**i'm gonna**

put my  
vote on a moat  
and stick  
it in  
a  
bar  
of  
soap  
and send it  
up  
the  
river  
to float  
so  
the  
hands  
of  
voter  
strangulation  
stay  
away  
from my  
hope.

## **left cleft liver**

quiver dance  
as the patrons from  
the edge  
squeeze through  
the middle  
to find  
the marrow  
of the sparrow  
as the last person  
is the line  
and the first person  
is the period.

right river gibberish  
as the current rips  
forward like  
an arrow positioned it  
towards the heart of the  
lizard,  
but smashed through the  
aorta of a baboon  
that was coming  
to your  
home  
with this one short  
smattering of nothing  
you  
can give  
to  
the  
arrow plodder.

## LIME GREEN PICK-UP TRUCK

the neighborhood  
lime green pickup truck  
is our guardian angel.

several years back,  
my car stalled up the street  
and it was the lime green truck  
in the driveway that gave me that extra bit  
of clairvoyance to call the right help  
and get myself back to whatever was supposed  
to be done that day.

more recently,  
our 8-year old and myself  
see this mysterious flash of green  
swish through these side streets  
like a modern day vigilante saving  
the world for all us small people in regular  
colored cars and  
brown coated thoughts.

then,  
my moment in the sun came on a recent cloudy day  
when i saw the lime green metal blur scream  
by on an overpass and as i  
just forgot about the truck,  
i pulled into park next to it in the grocery store  
parking lot.

excited,  
i leaped out to see the driver of this  
lime green dream and it was an older black fella  
with a half lit cigarette between his dry lips,  
an old flannel shirt,  
used blue jeans,  
black work boots,  
and he was heading towards the radio shack for  
something we couldn't remember.

and as this lime green god went by with  
all his automobile wisdom  
and full stack of chance encounters,  
i wished him well in his saintly duties  
as the workers inside radio shack  
wondered if that man had  
come through the doors before,  
earlier in  
that same  
week.

## MAYBE POEM

i want  
to pass an amendment,  
let's say '#41'  
that says you can either  
vote 'yes', 'no' or 'maybe'.

it's too much pressure with certain issues  
to just flat decide that you  
want it or not.

maybe i want several sides  
of both the yes and no side  
on very important measures that  
will inextricably effect the  
rest of my waking american life.

voting should be treated like  
a food buffet in a the classic  
american tradition of eating.

maybe i want the fortune,  
but not the cookie.

that's a real maybe decision.

perhaps i want the goo in crab rangoon,  
but not the outer crispy region.

a maybe eating decision.

my politics should be like my culinary decisions  
that i pay good money for.

in the future,  
i'm going to do a ballot write in on some 'yes' and 'no'  
issues and do a  
less than or equal to sign and write in all caps  
a very solemn 'MAYBE'.



## **memories**

are  
really  
only  
tiny  
flickers  
of  
light  
that  
have  
brief  
firecracker  
fuses that  
lead to  
the  
next  
one  
so  
that  
we  
can  
bang  
and  
bang  
over  
again  
to  
blot  
out  
the sound  
of  
the  
second hand  
telling us  
that our  
lives  
are  
here  
and  
now  
and  
we need  
something more  
than  
the  
swirl of  
air  
to  
account  
for  
our  
swirling,  
ticking,  
candle  
flicked

existence.

## **men**

are the  
best at making men  
look bad.

with a renowned  
idiocy for never growing out of  
cars, beer, porn and the dull tendencies of  
adhering to sociological testosterone,  
the men bumble along.

rarely expected to rear kids,  
their sperm kick into the egg shell is  
about as talented as it gets.

the unfettered ability to orgasm more than  
women as the men just lean back without  
all the blood and pain it takes to  
propagate this human race.

then,  
if married,  
men become the object of slow ridicule as the women  
look on and wonder how something can become so  
tyrannical and demanding.

stumbling along,  
the men slowly get to be resented over time  
by the women that have married them.

all the women over 50 that i actively know in this  
life truly dislike their men in ways that is sad and evident.

sure,  
these women would say they love,  
respect,  
and are devoted to their men kind,  
but they also despise the years of neglect,  
lack of orgasms,  
not enough money,  
not there enough for child rearing,  
petty squabbles,  
the indifferences.

and there you are as a man at the end of your life  
with you acquired real estate of existing as long as you  
have and the one person you spent it with is done with you.

it's a longing in the eyes of these women  
to have had something kinder and better,  
and it defines the path of man.

scrap the middle east peace plan,  
men have a much mightier task if we  
are to be anything other than anonymous buffoons

with a profound ability to squirt  
messes of sperm puddles  
into the  
future wind.

## MICROWAVE FOOD

the violent popping  
and crackling of a cheese concoction,  
or hot dogs in a microwave  
should be enough  
to scare me away from  
using such a device to quickly heat  
my soon to be digested foods.

instead,  
i wonder what is taking so long  
as the snoozing dogs and cats  
laying around rear their  
heads up slightly to listen  
to our uncooked food get butchered  
by high doses of scientific rays we are going  
to shovel into our mouths  
as the television in the other  
room  
faintly goes over the specific statistical  
rise in cancer rates over  
the last 15-years.

## MILE 'O TRUTH

our  
miles  
boy  
is  
so  
dangerously  
messy,  
he's  
the  
reason  
why  
most  
grandparent  
homes  
are  
clean  
like  
museums  
and  
spotless  
like a  
men's  
club  
john.

## MILES FOREVER UNFORGOTTEN

miles boy is  
always being recorded  
in one fashion or another.

whether it's his voice,  
image,  
moving images or  
by the pen,  
he won't be able to escape his  
life and likeness as it unfolds  
in the letter shapes of this poem  
spreading out like  
spilt molasses over a  
brand new computer keyboard.

each smile,  
some winces,  
the sound of yesterday,  
his entrance into this reality,  
and all the other peanut butter romances  
that make up his short life exist on many  
machines,  
pages,  
prints,  
servers,  
and discs  
for our collective  
remembrance  
as we get lost  
in the huddle  
of what we  
are really trying  
to accomplish by remembering everything  
as the notion  
of never becomes  
the one thing we collectively try to  
forget.

## my staples

the other day,  
our 8-year old asked why  
i have staples around  
my  
privates.

well,  
i began as the baby squawked over dinner,  
i'll just have to tell you later.

furthermore,  
i said that it was hard to concentrate  
and that i would tell him later.

knowing that I didn't want to quash his  
notions of how life is brought about on earth,  
i wanted to find the kindest way to tell  
him that i had a vasectomy.

after several days,  
we were in the car on the way back from  
getting food in the city and i told him  
that i was blocking my sperm from the egg.

it was either his mom getting tubes tied,  
or me going down with the local anesthesia to  
blockade my boys from swimming anymore.

months after the procedure,  
my sperm count finally at nil,  
i sit here as a new man  
in the same old body and still feel as  
though my manhood was as important as my  
wife's womanhood.

so as our tubes connect our thoughts,  
and our 8-year old understands a bit more  
about how we create the ultimate creation down  
here on earth,  
i await the next big sex talk as my  
staples heal just a bit more  
since the beginning of this  
stack of  
life bearing sentences.



## NEW TAKE ON TAMPONS

our miles boy  
loves to be in the bathroom  
with me in the morning  
as i wrap my brain around  
both of our lives  
and sit down on the toilet  
to think some more.

at this,  
he tears open the cabinet  
under the sink  
and reaches for his favorite  
thing underneath there.

a box of tampons.

doesn't matter where  
they are at,  
he tears through all the sponges,  
salts,  
half used containers  
and gets his hands on the  
tampon box as though  
he was the winner of a baby  
scavenger hunt.

i usually get to him pretty quick  
and put them back in,  
close up the cabinet,  
flush and get him out of there.

and as i reared up to tie up  
my pants,  
i noticed a box of condoms  
peeking from the slited opening of  
the medicine cabinet  
and decided that he's much  
too young for me to  
explain all this  
continual,  
adult  
toil.

## **oh, the man hustle**

i take delight in  
the  
newscaster  
saying that the  
man made it in time  
for the  
delivery of his  
child  
as if he is a  
superstar hero  
in a chariot of blinding  
yellow  
coming down out of the kindness of  
his heart  
to be there for the woman  
that is bearing all the  
physical pain  
and expunging 9 months of  
pure sacrifice  
so that the man  
can  
so caringly  
and benevolently  
be there without any of the  
pain  
and labor involved in the  
process  
and isn't the man so  
validated by the  
praise and adoration  
of those around him  
for being such  
a good fucking guy  
for making it there to  
hold the hand of  
the one that is  
doing all the real work.

after you trollop through  
this scenario  
you begin to see how  
corporate america  
works with their  
botch innuendoes  
of valor and heroism  
as the baby comes  
down the fallopian  
tube and  
the madness continues  
as the  
male  
opens his vocal cords  
to

say  
something.

## ONE-ARMED JEREMY

the moment all our  
images of 2-D telethon kids  
and late night appeals to help  
deformed 3rd world children ended abruptly  
when i was in the 4th grade.

our teachers,  
mrs. winters and mrs. slaughter,  
introduced all of us 60 kid faces  
to the new kid named jeremy mutton  
who had one arm,  
and another hook arm.

we all looked on in wonder  
as the girls felt sorry  
and the boys wondered what kind of damage  
that silver hook on the end of his prosthetic  
could yield onto the world.

as class resumed and we all exchanged our  
fair share of non-verbal pleasantries,  
we found out the real nature of jeremy.

he was jerk kid that wouldn't take any  
of the charity we had to offer  
because he had been bounced around like  
a token quarter for the duration of his life.

he was a fighter,  
but none of us scrappy poor kids would fight  
him because we were afraid he was gonna snag our  
eye sockets and send us into his circle of  
disability.

most kids alienated him because he was an  
angry sort that confounded us because we thought  
he craved all our attention and feigned friendships.

instead,  
he was the genius that had a seasoned understanding  
of humans that bested us by at least a decade or more.

in the end,  
we saw that he lived in near squalor,  
his mom was a very large woman that wasn't around much,  
and his deformed body was the least of his concerns  
as all our dumb faces looked on  
as though  
we knew how to heal the healthy.