



Joefiles LXIX

Crack heads
on
a
food stamp
budget

(\&\&\&\&\&\&\&\&\&\&\&\&)

superman in the shipyard
looking for olive oil
to baste the chicken in ..

another superhero tucked
under the belly
of
a
small ship
waiting
to
STRIKE ..

workin' one at home

writin' where
the typing left
off

as
the kids wish for another fight
they have no idea why they are fighting ..

sketchin' on the doodle pad
for not having a brush and
a
palette of paint
as
the people interview for jobs
that are way below their pay level
because
we
are still recoverin' from a nasty recession

that the bad guys
planned
and

carried out
in
the
invisible ringing bell
above

some towers that used to stand off the harbor in New York ..

people still washin' clothes,
cookin' brisket,
taking the dog to shit down the block,
filling the oil pan to the hilt
and
trimmin' the hedges
for

all
the
new foliage a hopeful country

wants to look at again ..

word rapping in time

oh,
it's gonna
be

a
matter
of
time ..

time
before
the
moon
comes up behind your back
and
trims
your

hair

and
loosens your shoelaces ..

a matter
of

time
until
the
car
goes off the track
and
comes straight for your
wallet
and

comes away with the remaining bites
of
dignity

you
have

been hiding
in
her
warm

spot ..

just

a
matter of time
until
your

limp becomes
a
kick in your step
and
overtakes
the
small horse

looking to
grab

the
finish line

and
eat

all

the sugar left in
town ..

woman perched naked

over the
3AM window sill yelling from the new place for the boys
to
shut the fuck up with their
honkin' over and over
as
I wait for them to
see my naked cock
&
want to really kick my
ass
real
good ..

**wishing away the used cloth
shoes
&
such**

throwin' away holed-up socks
and
tan/yellow soiled
undershirts
as
I get ready to move
into another abode
somewhere here in the inner part of the city ..

sure,
trash bags full of
used
cloth and
belts that long ago gave up on keeping me up ..

then,
there are the clown masks I keep around,
the old ball glove,
the paper's from Europe
and a coin
in case

the gum looks
sweeter than a solid lemon ..

sure,
you have to give
it
away sometimes

to realize
why it came to you in
the
first place ..

&
if it doesn't hit you when you give it away
it
will
in

the back of your
mind

when you're having a mid-evening nap

to
the background
sounds

of
a
piano's players opus ..

who remembered to let the dog out?

rock
tempo
lock
limbo
some
sun
in
the gun
of
a
good run,
the guys climb out of the white caprice classic,
flip the beep - beep
alarm

and
go towards the Montclair
to
see how
the
gals are doing ..

rick
rack
on
the
back
of
a
stack

as
the
burgers
out flip the flapjacks
and

all the people
in
the
waiting room clamor to talk
about

how
the
weather is doing
or
whether

there's

even
weather
to
talk

about at all ..

tonight july

all out of cold beers in
the
place,
my scab has healed over,
smoking almost snuffed out cigarettes,
my lover is somewhere in the city
or dreaming of the Pentagon in her sleep,
the chorus hits their pitch and
backs off their prior demands
as
the heat hits bitch level
and
the coal
is

being shipped slowly to Texas down the railroad lines
a
block or so away in the bottoms ..

ready to leave the place
for
a
good cold glass of suds
as
the
hawks plunge towards the water for a fat fish
and

the
British get ready to give
their
6AM morning report in London ..

worlds away
and no word of a suicide bombing in days ..

makes
you
a
little tepid to look in the morning paper
and

anxious to later look
into
the

eyes of the dreaming
eye

and

the
nudity that
will

unfold
delightfully
before

your closed eye lids ..

today's promise & no cigarette to prove it

old Mexican man walkin'
down 7th kicks a
hard piece of long tin
into the 101 degree street,
going to the bar for
a
drink on the corner as
the
cops laugh it up with the locals
in the 7th St. cafe off the highway
path
askin'
for more bread
and
napkins
to mop up what's left of the town ..

feelin' the sting
of
glorious heat as
the Mexican orders
another and the
day gels together
like a woman by
a
lanky,
cool
body of water ..

they ask if i'm married,

have kids,
own a home
or
have
more than one car ..

these kids
around me all day
and
they go away in silence
when
they find out that none are the case ..

excited to find out that others
are
in their parent's boat ..

they want something to compare
with
or
something

to write into their brain
because
that's what all the commercials and TV shows
say
should happen by a certain age ..

it's not necessarily the fear ..

the fear is what gets people
wrapped up into messy situations to begin with ..

no,
its being
assured about where
you

are
at
that

gets you
to

the
x
a
x
y-z ..

Talkin' poet legend of Kansas

I see him
about every other day
now that I have to
be averted from my
regular route down 'MINNESOTA' ..

they are building
a
new energy building
and hotel
for
the limping town in Kansas ..

I see the KCK poet waddling down the street
continuing a continual conversation ..

waggin his head,
full gray beard speckled with black,
bag of cold McDonald's,
a stack of plagiarized - religious poems
in a slightly orange manila envelope
and
just a talkin' to himself ..

I peer to the left to hear him or read his lips,
but
it's all nonsense ..

the right kind of nonsense
for
this
drifter to keep the minute
moving
into
another hour

and
to keep him delightfully insane ..

the only way he knows
and
the only way I
have come accustomed to know ..

the patron
saint of a town
just copyin'
and
talkin'

in
circles until

the new buildings
have
their grand,
grand
opening ..

still payin' off the down payment

dangerous intersections,
innocent strips of street
as
the people collect on the porch
and hide the guns from the cops ..

here in the collective law of the land,
we
huddle around the TV set drama
cheering on the next American Idol
as
we wait for the next one to have their 47 seconds of fame ..

perched on the edge of excitement at
the
sight of a television camera
as
many people spend
years
and
years

to pay off
that

big screen television screen ..

started for the finishers

rolling
the rocks
over
the
stones as
the
stereotypes
remain
in the
old Dolgin's ad still stuffed in the back seat of that
Lincoln my dad used to talk so fondly about
when Jimmy Carter was
giving the people across the country enough
reason to make Tums
the only product in the medicine cabinet ..

sure,
the nice guys did finish last
because the nicer one's finished first
while
they
turned into
rapists,
murderers,
thieves,
swindlers,
con men
and
other such vocations of deceit ..

so,
when the question of the hour
is
asked in the middle of a clock face that has since lost
it's arms
and
remaining integrity,
hop

on those fucking legs and feet
and
move

on down
the
street towards the largest ring
of
fire burning next
to
a

tiny

cup

of

water ..

someway past Sunday

the drama amongst strained, old friends
while
I ready to leave the room ..

sure,
you get to a point
when
the
drama
is
something you accidentally run into on
the
TV
or have with your gal after a week or month of
not quite getting everything out ..

sure,
when it comes
to
peripheral shit that can trickle into
a
conversation
not

needed or
known

for
me,
you

can
smell my

position leaving

and have
a
good fucking
yell

for
all those interested ..

something about a dream

dreams of the Mexicans
attacking on
the
4th
as
the girl in the back of the class winks as the ring leader
and
largest conspirator ..

I stand in the front of the classroom
asking
angrily why I was berated in my mailbox for
some time with
rumors and threats of
a
coming
ring of disaster that
she promised me ..

she said nothing ..

feigning off that she knows limited English,
I ask
a
man in the front row
to
translate my message of explanation ..

after speaking my
line,
the girl the back
re-crosses her
hands

and
just winks
a
clean glare ..

and that's where
we
stood
as
the
alarm
poked through the morning
air

on
the
morning of the 3rd ..

she got me where I needed it

the beauty
of
bein' in a relationship with someone for
some time
is
that they will
tend
to
amaze you by surprise
with

a
little
thing

that's

pretty
hi-fi sizable after
you
ponder it a moment ..

my lover friend and I took the kid by
the
bookstore tonight ..

got a needed cup of hot caffeine,
read about the 50 most essential jazz albums of all time (somewhat accurate),
and
read the boy some stories by some fake trees
in an
extra small chair ..

as we were leaving,
some guy leaning against the bus pole looked up at me with a cup of change and said,
'HEY BUDDY, YOU MIND HELPIN' ME OUT WITH A DOWN PAYMENT ON A
CHEESEBURGER?'

I have nothin',
I told him
as
he looked up at my lady
and
said 'HI. I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR SOME TIME.'

'YEA,'
she came back in ease.
'HOW YOU DOIN'?'

He said,
'GOOD. I'M LEAVIN' NOW.'

He got up as though she cracked a whip at his plastic cup
and sent it hurtling past the new investment broker ..

He got up
and hurried off down the street ..

I asked her,
'WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU SAY TO HIM? DO YOU EVEN KNOW HIM?'

Yes,
she said,
he makes over \$48,000 a year as a pan handler,
has been profiled on 20/20,
has a big house paid for,
she knows him from prior conversations,
yet she has blasted him in the past for preying on willing souls ..

thus,
she won ..

she sent the man packin' in a hurry
and
it didn't even seem to phase her ..

my wonder woman
hidin'
her
garments
under
the
cool of a good
solid

night

without
any money of our own to buy a book if we wanted it
and
a
comfortable belly
full
of

food with the money and coupon

that the paying
folk

have to use

to survive

this
race to a money riot ..

several streets around

one basketball in the gutter,
the boy on the porch just went back inside,
the girl stays in bed to touch her vitals,
the post man plows over a big stick in reverse as the
sound
goes
beep
beep
bop
beep,
the cigarette is lit,
the bald man in aviators swivels up the sidewalk west,
head west chief,
blues with Shapiro
on the radio vox,
last night was with us
as
this afternoon is,
but the morning seems to find a way
to allude me ..

a new couple
is coming from
the
obstruction of the trees,
down the middle of the street
towards this
home
on
the
corner

and
the other
homes

hiding
out
there

on the corners,
middles,
ends
and

somewheres
there
is

a place

to

lay their head down ..

scale to the right; someone has left

*little man blues
in a mute room
as
the horse with a tamale in his back pocket
and a scarf around his neck
goes off to the bathroom
to
brush his teeth
for another lover horse that is going
to come
by
to witness the horse fuck
that*

*is going to come through the door anytime
with
a
torn shirt
and
a pair of snake eyes in his top front pocket ..*

right above his heart ..

runnin' from stoppin'

the boy in the big black suburban
sequels his tires
towards the STOP sign,
then runs the sign
going slow ..

averting danger
as
though it's a brief caution
the kids get tired of bein' told about
by the
school teacher
who has
their big bag of mistakes
sitting on the front desk like
a
ring jewel she wants
to personally hand out to the kids ..

the big black suburban
remembers to stop at the next
light
as

the following street of streamin' cars
doesn't stop
and
doesn't care
to
stop as
Saturday streams by like
a
thought

that
a kite

can only mimic

as
speed is our passion
and
stopping

is just flat givin' up,
out here ..

run to the sun

I know it's hot
and
I moved on
the hottest day of the summer ..

could be seen as nuts,
middle of the damn day,
guzzlin' a troupe of cokes and
waters to stay on my feet ..

but
I heard about a woman today on the radio
who recently ran
over 130 miles in an insane race across Death Valley ..

It
felt fine to have a hot move
until I heard about the balls on
this gal ..

a supremam loon
who is laughin' at us for
just
tryin' ..

rock talk

the rock-n-roll shows
and the
rock-business talk
between the musicians
as

the club runs out of water
and
the
beer is too expensive
to
just keep pissing out ..

it's very warm outside ..

too young for it to be so warm ..

the black and white photos of
prior bands that played in the club
and since made it big
all
look comfortable in their
poses

and
the
fact that there are good girlfriends left in the world ..

so,
the booking agent brings over
a
big lug of a guy
with blond locks
that has
'CONNECTIONS'

as
I drift into
a talk
with the booking agent's girlfriend
with
one wandering eye

and
my
trouble
now
is to pick
an
eye to talk to ..

pops and the white frog

the 18-pound white frog
playing a trombone
was promised to come flying out of my dad's ass
if
I could return him a
set of tapes I borrowed ..

well
the day came ..

though,
he is hospitalized and
not
in
the
shape to do so now ..

he needs a pace maker embedded into his chest to keep him
moving

and
I'll

just
have
to
take a
snow check on the frog

as
the
summer lakes
croak with

folly
and
irony

here
in
this July town tonight ..

people who belong in cities

was
coming up the steps to the place,
key in hand,
ready to enter
when the painted face of the
gay man
stopped me to
ask
about a scene in a movie
involving Hawaiian shirts
that was sparked by my
shirt ..

I've seen him around from time to time
hanging around the
trash dumpster several floors below my window ..

he has a small dog,
he wears tight and short shorts,
his voice is high and jumbled ..

he usually says 'hello'
yet
this time he
stopped me with the preface,
'EXCUSE ME. I'M NOT ASKING FOR MONEY. I JUST WANTED TO ASK YOU A QUESTION.'

he asks me the significance of Hawaiian shirts in a
particular movie
I have caught myself on the TV ..

I tell him
that is signified the beaten man in the corporate world finally getting his pay day,
making it to the island
and
sitting down to a solid beverage on the beach ..

he said,
'CLOSE. VERY CLOSE. IT WAS THE SCENE IN THE MOVIE WHERE THEY GET TO WEAR
HAWIIAN SHIRTS TO THE OFFICE.'

sure,
sure,
I assure him ..

then,
he goes into another scene in the movie that was profound
after watching it several times,
but I couldn't understand what he was saying ..

his jumbled voice,
painted face,
small dog looking at me with the pouting bugged eyes
was
getting me a bit ..

yet,
what strikes me the most about the man is that he's looking for
someone ..

just some one
to accept him for
his
way
for
the way he is ..

enough to scare the fucking wits out of
most people you pass in a day,
this

man
was nothing short of harmless
and

he's would be the one that
would be wrongfully lynched in a small town masquerade
behind
a
shit load of booze ..

the city
is
a
good refuge for the
freaks
and
lasers
looking for a wall to land on ..

though,
you may want to go a little light on the face paint
even

if there is a
festival in town,
pal ..

one work day keeps the burbs away

this could be one reason
why
people move off to the suburbs
and
let the city deal
with
its own case
of
stories ..

I was interviewing a man named Fred for
a
job as a lab instructor
when a red haired woman with black shades comes up to the
door of my lab
and
asks if she could talk to me for two seconds ..

I leave Fred behind and go over to see
what
she wants ..

she asks if her three kids are still a part of the
program we
run at a YMCA ..

I tell her that her girl,
Jasmine,
is the only other remaining one coming
down to the
center on a regular basis ..

the others
pulled off jagleg shit and
got the permanent boot early in the summer months ..

though,
I told her,
Jasmine is the youngest,
smartest
and
most honest of them all ..

well,
she begins,
I just wanted to
check and see how they were ..

she continues by telling me that she
has had a nasty crack habit

that is no more ..

she's been clean for some time now ..

this,
behind a dirty pair of shades
and
a
body and face that looks like its been
through
a
field of barbed wire
and healed by a hell hot sun ..

so,
she says in a list of non-sequiters
that her husband,
which has custody of the three kids,
is after her ..

that he is infiltrating their head with lies
and
the
fact that it is presumed that she sold her child Jasmine
off to a lesbian at age 5 for a rock of crack
is absurd ..

further,
she went on to tell me that she has been on the streets since
she was 13 and has seen it all ..

drugs,
prostitution,
alcoholism,
destitution
and
the other perils of street life
that most of the public see only when going to see
that once in a while film at the cinema
on
how
fucked people can get
when led by the
body and needle into the depths
of
hell few can put a finger on ..

this,
while Fred waits and
the clock gets tired of likely hearing the same
story over and
over
again ..

then,
she ends by telling me to let Jasmine know that she loves her ..

telling her this
without
having her know that she stopped by ..

a court order is keeping
her away from the kids ..

so,
trying to hold to my word,
I see Jasmine after my interview
and
Fred is off onto the sidewalk looking
for
that
job
while
the
paper's scream of better times that are to be coming ..

I think of a way to break the 'love' news to Jasmine
without
letting her know that her mother was in about 30 minutes before ..

though,
I didn't have to search much farther
as
the
news was broken by a little girl in the program that
saw her mother there earlier ..

so,
Jasmine asks for a minute with me ..

I close the door
and
she asks,
'WHAT DID SHE SAY TO YOU?'

I tell her,
'SHE WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT SHE LOVES YOU, KID. THAT'S IT. I WASN'T EVEN
GOING TO LET YOU KNOW
UNTIL THE BAG OF TRICKS WERE LAID OUT ON THE FLOOR AND I HAD NO CHOICE.'

she nods
and looks distraught ..

she begins telling me the story of her mother ..

how she's still a crack whore,
woke up in her front yard early the previous evening whacked to the gills,
she does so much dope to keep her going for days that she occasionally OD's,
she killed several kids by premature births in the toilet,
has a strong restraining order against ever seeing the kids again,
she lied to me and said that she didn't sell her daughter off,
that she tried to kill Jasmine on a visit to the hospital by trying to flush

her down the toilet,
she has been shot,
stabbed,
jumped from a moving car
and
all the like ..

basically she told me that there is no hope for her ..

I told her that she really probably needed to get hurt bad or have something taken
away from her ..

Jasmine said nothing doin' ..

if what has happened so far hasn't changed the case yet,
there was no hope ..

so there we sit,
little to say
and
more that needs to be said ..

I told her to slough it off ad worry about herself ..

the fucked adults of the world can find their own way ..

kids can't continue going on raising the older folk
while the record
needle skips
and
I try to glean the truth from both ..

but the truth is that they are both right and both lying
and
the only wounds that can be healed are those
that
are given a chance to heal ..

so,
as the sun continues to fully go down over the city
and
the burbs hop with an early night
for
bed

I say

keep on keepin' on
as
this city

kid gets
ready to hop into the car
on
the
street

and
hope that it's still there and not broken into ..

just thought
I
would
drop this by you
before

I leave
into
these

mean
mean

American streets,
you ..

**one brave jazz man
missed**

RAY BROWN died this week at 75 ..
he took a nap before performing ..
the most popular musician
that no one knew about ..

dead without the world of music throwing
a
vigil ..

taking down every note as though it
was
a
glass of water being devoured in the
hot
holy hell
heat of July ..

he
groomed the best and was softened by the
greatest ..

a man
with
talents that should have bought him a steak,
yet
all he could aptly afford was a good hunk of tuna sandwich ..

gone after three seven and a half decades
and
a
small mention on the radio news
and
evening TV segment ..

fuck right Ray ..

you
gave it to the people
and

I
have
a
steak
waiting

in the
ether for you to grab on
the

way out

as

the
music

fades
slowly

on
the face of a quarter ..

three quarters and
one
nickel,
pal ..

once night in the city

I got the
'HEY SIR, NICE MULLET'
comment
twice
from
3 short haired white kids walking with 1 bimbo ..

out with the gal and her 11-year old nephew and 4-year old son
on a late Saturday evening stroll around the city
as
the
suburb crew came flying out of a nearby hotel
over
the
crosswalk towards their 4x4 dully ..

after their comment
I
was pushed to almost say,
'SURE. SURE. NOT ONLY DO YOU HAVE THE WRONG INFORMATION ABOUT A MULLET,
WHICH A BUSINESS ON TOP AND PARTY IN THE BACK. MY HEAD IS ALL PARTY, KIDS. YOU
ALL LOOK AWFULLY DAPPER IN THE EXACT SAME HAIRCUT THAT LOOKS AWFULLY
NEAT AND TIDY AFTER GANG FUCKING YOUR GAL TOY FOR SOME TIME.
CONGRATULATIONS. SHE'S BORED YET AGAIN AND YOUR ARE ALL FUELED BY BAD
INFORMATION. GOOD LUCK ON YOUR TRIP BACK TO THE SUBURBS.'

Instead,
I opted to not even broach the subject,
but give
them
a
good look in case they wanted to meet eyes with me ..

not one in the
coward crew could do such ..

so
this
is for you ..

and
there's
nothing else

to be said
as
your women flip through a page of personals
while

you

shit out
the

last beer
in
that

case
of
beer that just went off sale ..

old, tired flesh & bone

she's been workin' too damn hard
for
too many years
as
her
big son goes up the street
next to her twirlin'
a
little blue bag
full of pills,
drink,
pens,
the rest of the stranger's thought bag
or
other ..

she winces as she
reaches for that cell phone in her purse
as
the big boy looks around and wags like he's on the dance floor ..

she presses talk,
feels like
she's in one of those rap videos on BET
and
everything feels all right ..

just
fine
in
a
music video fantasy
to
take her away from the fantasy on the
streets they talk about ..

it's gonna be a good day
and
her son

wags his big head towards his momma
and
aks',
'WHAT TIME IS IT NOW MOMMA?'

she doesn't respond

to
keep a hold of her day dream ..

not broken after the break in

less than 3 days in
the place
and
my car has already been broken into ..

left the passenger side door open ..

noticed all my tapes on my seat
neatly stacked together
with
a gleam of ribbon looking anxiously towards my face ..

the glove box ripped open,
a stuffed elephant lying on the open lip of the
box ..

tape covers strewn on the floor,
a newspaper open in the backseat,
nothing was missin' ..

must have pissed this person off real good ..

the radio wasn't even fucked with ..

there's nothing finer than
a
crook that can't find a thing after
all that hard work ..

it's my pleasure to serve
the crooks out there
with
some of the worst

service goin' ..

come back by anytime
for
a
sack of nothin'
and

eyes gleaming
with
pupils

of
potential ..

no hips on that one

knives in trumpet cases
and
people waiting at the corner,
neighborhood bar ..

sneaking,
stealing glares,
glances,
glasses of
used beer ..

socks full of luck pennies
that refuses to be stuck in gum ball machines
and
the
sky is getting ready to rain machetes
and
blow low a tune
from
the
saxophone's accompanying swan song ..

so,
as you look up for the drops
to fall,
the only drops
are
going to
be
the
suckers

licking the old lady's lollipop
as
she
twirls in a dance
class

oblivious
to
her

robbed home
and

an insurance rep that just had a heart attack
riding
his
favorite girl
square

in

the

hot shot spot ..

next fall

gone with the voice
and
inherited by the metaphor,
the
phone takes on a strange tone
as

she comes to me with a
tailored
voice
and

tempered walk ..

just
waitin'
for

the next big moment to happen again here in
America

as
the
boring folk
do
their
boring
things

while the curly tip of an ice cream cone
gets

handed over
to the child's hand

exactly two months
to
Sept. 11 of 2002

and
1 year later to
the

next time the

big day of days
comes
towards us again

in

the

invisible messages floating over
a

bay

there in Cuba

and

a
site

somewhere across the Hudson in NY, NY ..

near 7 on 8/1

pink dress,
white shirt,
handful of groceries,
nothin' said
&
everything
that needs to be said
hangs in
the hot,
soiled airs
of this apartment slightly sweetened
by
the
bits
of
good,
good
smoke
wafting ..

morning move

headstrong,
apples growing along the fence
as
9AM eats my cup of coffee
&
we all than the believers for not going
back to the way
it
was ..

sure,
with the licks clickin' this
morning,
the address book only
holds a bunch of numbers as
another person I know decides
to
move ..

we're on the massive on the massive
migration to the next change
as
people when we
suppose it
would be
more
sufficient to have consistency ..

oh,
I need to get up ..

these
people
that make
me
move ..

metal fire song

just lit my
cigarette with
the
zippo I found
in
the
old insane man's
old rental home ..

now emptied
and
falling loose
with
the
magnolia leaves dropping,
I walked in

with my lover
to take a look over the piece
later inhabited by the Mexicans ..

broken tile,
a dirty lot of floors,
the must of old life flitting about,
then
I come across a kitchen

and
a
zippo with a football helmet on the top of the face ..

I picked up fire's
potential,
brought it back to life
with a flint and hot fluid ..

now,
flickering with too much to drink
and

a
field of cigarettes plucked and
ready
to
smoke ..

I take in this pile of smoke for you

insane

man

and
those

ramblings that made
the
local

papers
and
the
back

pages of the psychiatric hospitals

patient listing ..

here's
to

you with this smoke

I light once again ..

mayoral chase

I wrote a
letter to the mayor of a big city in Kansas ..

it pissed her off
something
good enough
that
she called a higher up
on the job
to
give me a good look at
and
try to make it right ..

told her the town
I worked in and paid taxes in was
an 'overblown joke' ..

this,
in re-election time,
didn't settle
well ..

she thought that I was teaching
the kids I work with
'negative' shit and that
I should be stopped ..

so,
I invited her first in command to come by and
talk about the letter ..

not taking a lick of a letter off the letter,
we
talked ..

she walked away happy ..

wants the Mayor to come by and see the kids
and I
on
the
job ..

sure,
politics is worse than kids play ..

when the object of criticism comes under fire,
they always send out their assistant ..

when they are jubilant,
they talk about how good it is that taxes are being hiked to help such worthy causes ..

when they don't arrive into work that day,
there's no press conference ..

&
when the kids
speak

seems
to
me that

the politic-ians show
up

when the camera is hungry

and
there's something

we don't know about
at
stake ..

so,
Ms. Mayor,
if I didn't mention it in my
letter
to
you

please
read the next line ..

'fuck you' ..

good night,
folks ..

makin' it somewhere

ghetto copter searches out the
new body of food
and
her ambles like her wants to know what's
going on in a parked car,
lit apartment or
a
patch of growing grass ..

shit,
probably only needs one
more drink he thinks
as

the
next of black out comes towards
his crooked walk
and

the
city
just stays hush
for
the
sound of a dog bark
remaining

as
he
disappears off like the vapors off a fast approaching highway bluff ..

gone,
probably fiddling
with
bills
remaining in his pocket
or

looking for his lady ..

I'm pulling for
a
couch for this guy ..

mad midtown move

the crazy family
with the black boy
moved
from the neighborhood
quickly

as
the
vacant lot
looks more
full
of
life than ever before ..

took them under a week
to
announce they were moving
and
less time to orchestrate the quiet move ..

on down the lane
of
crazy glances
and
forced lies behind closed doors
as
the
black boy shakes back and forth in silence
for all he knows
and
more that he would like to forget ..

James,
when you make it into your new place
do

what you
can to get away ..

even if it requires you
to
drift away mentally on a toy air craft carrier ..

there's
more

than one way to get away and
going from
house
to

house with the insane dropping pills
down your throat to keep you
calm

won't do ..

you have to
ride
ride
ride
the
rain

for
all the water
you

want to eventually pump out of that well ..

**Lookin' at me more than
I'm lookin' at you**

flippin'
by in her flimsy shoes,
green shorts,
yellow shirt,
spanish to the top of the eyebrow,
walkin' over
the
branch in the road
as
the
roadsters
scream by and
Etta
tells
us
how the man finally
left her before she
had
to
kick him out
to
the
landfill ..

oh the sweet memories
as
Elvis makes
a
mayonnaise and pickle
sandwich somewhere
in
the
Caribbean ..

it's in the cat and mouse
days
of
this August heat
wave

as
the
ground appears to be
stable
in
the
eye of a cigarette burn
on
the index finger ..

sure,
middle America
in
the
middle of talking about another war
as
the
chess board
goes flying off into the air
and

the
last glass of white
wine

gets dumped
down the throat of
the

young

girl
walking home
to
feed her infant ..

**Late
Hot
So
July**

coal miners
stuck
in
a
shaft,
the man corners the corner and
goes up the street
with
yet another bag of groceries
while
the
president blasts off about a bomb
that just went off in a crowded area in
Israel ..

sure,
the drama,
instincts,
human meddling,
cops with jobs,
preachers with more words than thoughts,
the
time
for
sugar
robbed the salt
of
all it's potency

as
the
cook
just got the meal

at
a
point

where it's
ready to be shoved into the oven ..

what
will
he do now ?



Grandview Middle School

Thursday, Friday and Saturday

February 22, 23, 24

7:00 p.m.

Tickets

(available at the door)

Thursday Performance \$3.00

Friday Dessert Theater \$5.00

Saturday Performance \$3.00

just talk to me, man

stop me the next
time
I have to interview someone for a job ..

such a humiliating
display
to
watch most of the time ..

there was this one I interviewed
the
other day to teach folk how to use
computers
in
a
lab ..

his name was Dwight ..

a good natured man at around 45 ..

desperate for the job
and
telling me everything about him other than what
I would hire him for ..

'A BLACK BELT'
'GOOD AT GUITAR - HENDRIX, YOU KNOW - PURPLE HAZE'
'THE TIME HE ALMOST DROWNED AND GOT THE VOICE FROM THE LORD THAT TOLD HIM
TO GO OUT AND TELL THE WORLD ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE'
'HIS FEW TALENTS'
'TAKE ME UNDER YOUR WING - HE ASKED ME'

when it came down to what he could do on
the
computer there wasn't much there ..

and good for him for kicking someone's ass
or playing the picker well ..

just seems so futile
when someone comes in to fix your sink
and an hour later tells you how well they can make a bologna sandwich ..

good,
good,
but where am I going to flush the bad pieces
of
the
sandwich when done ..

down the sink that won't work
or

up the crank

where the bullshit arm
is
swinging
and
swirlin' with

temptuous vigor ..

just numbers until we meet

she's watching
a
film
in

a bar
on
31st ..

she calls me
at my place
on
11th

as
the
11th day of July goes
just east of the sun
and
west of the moon
over
the
diva's radio croon ..

sure,
down with the empty bottle just thrown
by

a neighbor friend across the way

and fluttering with the new pacemaker
in
my pop's chest ..

another lane
of
traffic
opened

as
the
bridge closes
down

for
new

repairs,
but

more access

once you snap out

of
that

nap

in
the
12 minute
of
the
8th hour ..

inside vs. outside porch

a big
reason for moving was to have a porch to
hang out on,
some hardwood floors,
a good spot with action around
and some space to let
my
legs stretch
in the nude or close to ..

I found it ..

and looking around at all the places in this town
with big swoopin' porches
with a solid view and spread to look around
I never saw anyone out on the porch ..

Is everyone too busy to
sit with a cup on the stoop
or
do they come out when I'm not out lookin' around ..

tend to believe that people just get porches
as a novelty ..

there's no real hangin' going on and
that
strikes me as odd ..

so,
as I hang out on the porch in
this new place ..

try to join me,
the mosquitoes with the Nile virus
aren't going to bite ..

they're after the animals
and
the

view is
dandy enough
to
take the risk ..

we'll see you outside
if
you have the balls ..

in case it doesn't make it ..

when
the page is finally
written in
stone,
the
rock masonries
are
going
to
take up knitting
and

tell stories
of
rock climbers

that
made it to the top of the pass
to
merely take
a
short
sweet piss
into

the folds ..

i'm looking over later afternoons, now

the old guy
ambles slowly up
37th on his 10 speed ..

in the easiest,
slowest gear
with a satisfied grin,
big pack on his
back
and
bitch heat hittin' him on all sides ..

must be runnin' an
experiment
as
the
kids in this hood
walk to the newest hangout
to
contemplate adulthood
and
the angel that may
save
them one day ..

I choose to be around the kids because

the
adults are get on my
grapes ..

I choose to be around the kids because
the car
being sold to me is
almost new and
there are
no miles and a cheap pay schedule ..

I choose to be around the kids because
I'm doin' my fuckin' damndest
to keep
them
out of a job
that
will

turn them into angry mongers
towards the end of their 401k mode ..

I choose to be around the kids because
a mistake
is merely an attempt
and

they will likely be better than
all us adults some day ..

I choose to be around the kids because
there's something
about
an
altered fire

that
can

keep your hands
just
right
and
warm

when the cold wind
comes smacking down
on

you like a 4 cent drug dealer asking for your last nickel
in
the
silver stack ..

hot liquid in my lap

rushin' to get into the car,
start the engine,
big full hot cup of coffee
to
get to work and interview someone
to
teach computer's to kids
as
I type on this one now ..

engine starts,
I smash over a green ball growing on the tree next to me and falling into
the street ..

felt like I popped my front left tire
as
I switch the car into second
and
smack into the side of the coffee mug
and
spill the whole damn thing into my lap ..

still a pace or two from home,
I say fuck it and let the pool of coffee
slosh around my lap
and
seat ..

worth a good laugh
and
the mark of a morning started ..

ends up that the guy named 'MICHAEL'
cancelled on the interview
and
I ignored the kid knocking on the door
to get in because
I wanted to leave soon ..

letting the coffee spill get cold
on
my lap ..

I had to get back out into the world
to take a bath
and
let
my
new found friend
of

coffee

evaporate in
the
rising heat outside ..

just
evaporatin'
into
the
day

as
everything on the
ground
and

streets
rise like mushrooms
in
a
brand new field
of
brown ..

hot clean woman sweeping up the bridge

ahhh
there's my gal with the bandana on the bridge ..

at the highest,
yellowiest,
hottest,
nawing,
choking,
relentless,
vomitous
parts of the day
she's
up there on the bridge sweeping
and
sweeping ..

this woman always has a broom
and works
around the boys
who
crank the hand hammers,
yank concrete from the ground,
hang under a shaded piece of patio furniture ..

but
notice my gal there on the bridge looking down with her
dark brown shades pushing the dirt of another's dollar
off to the side
as
a
shiftless kick of dust came flying over her head
and lifting the back of that bandana into
a
fine bristled point ..

sure,
my gal
with her
baby blue,
pink,
faded red,
yellow,
faded cobalt blue
and
other assorted bandanas
just

sweeps
and
weeps

up

all the dirt
on
that
little stretch of road
going to Fairfax ..

sure,
my gal
with the clothe around her head
could
probably kick every male's ass on
that
bridge

which
is
likely why she's
always
sweeping up ..

have sack of CD's and everywhere to go ..

been evicted from sun warped cassette tapes,
the 8-track was 8 times away from my generation,
the next train with vinyl stopped by the wrong station
as

I burn more
songs

and
laser treat my toe nails
for

the
horny
girls

eating the remains of my music ..

so,
tonight,
as I ready to move
out of this place ..

my hopes ride on a sack of CD's
and

every damn
corner

to
be ..

fuck-her & them

I'm the biggest
fool
I
know

hoping every minute
that
I find
the
genius

who
will never
be
discovered
and

mistook a clever crossword
puzzle
for

an
IQ test ..

First day or so off Baltimore St.

found
the coop to land
on ..

off main,
out
of
Pennsylvania ..

where the cars are loud
and

can fall apart if you lend the right ear ..

feels
like

home

looks

like home ..

somewhere the insanity
never

had a chance to leave
as
I sit in
the

overgrown
heat

and wait for it
to
grow

grow into
a
large

pile of hot rock

I can lie
in

and

laugh ..

firecrackers and police lights

everyone's in a roar
over
the
4th day of July
this year ..

some months after the terror
and
another watermelon
into the
cold
headlong path
of
fruits
and
rumors ..

the air was thick
with the residue
of
exploding the Chinese paper origami's
and

the people were still shooting them off ..

there wasn't a space of 3 or more seconds where
you could count
when people weren't blowing
their
wallets loose ..

everywhere ..

even in the city ..

at one point,
we noticed some kids shooting
fireworks off
a
bridge overpass
at cars ..

whistlin' firecrackers,
roman candles
and assorted fire
at
passing cars ..

made me wonder where the fuck the parents went ..

then,
the sirens careened around the corner at the nearby
intersection towards the
kids
and
their settling smoke in the evening's 4th symphony ..

I could almost hear
the
explosion of piss tricklin' down their
legs
as
the
car pulled to a stop

and
the
sounds
of

the night
finally
and
briefly came
to
a

needed
halt ..

digs are new

movin' in,
movin' out
as
August 1
comes and the lilac bushes go ..

movin' out,
movin' in
as
the
directions take the compass on
a
confusing excursion ..

movin' on,
movin' out
as
the
new place on
Baltimore feels more than moved in
&
I lay here
like a beaten catcher's mitt
looking for the
right
hand
to
play with ..

Cool August Winds

revving engines,
crack whores in pink prancing the block,
shirtless dudes looking for a couple of tough fists,
the broken down suburban starting again,
landladies trimming the grass,
old green fruit falling to the ground,
a tired couple fucking off into sleep,
the small children wait for one more book to hear the folks read,
the read end of a breathless woman,
the last of the noodles going down the throat of an advertised dragon,
loud tunes coming from a guys back seat at the intersection of
37th and somewhere

here
in
the mid to downtown
on

an
evening cooled by luck
and
heated up by what
will

make you
sweat

with a little work
and
luck,
if you're lucky ..

company minions and the hopeful quarter

corporate tycoons
pictured on the front of newspapers
in
cuffs

as
company after company around here
file
for
Chapter 11 ..

new unemployment lines,
the
employee again gets the ram rod
trying
to
pay the rent and get
canned vegetables ..

I say
lock up these clowns in their
dirty bills
of
financial health ..

go in with swords and root out the
white collar criminals in lieu of the

honest trying to make a portion of the
eternal dollar
floating in a hologram over
the
reflective glass of the tall skyscraper ..

always had a hunch that the
people were getting
the

losing face of the penny,
but
now

there seems to be a glimmer of justice
as

I
wait to pay rent with my meager
pay

and
watch the
next
can of beer whiz by on the conveyor belt ..

can you believe the heat?

it was so hot the other night
that showering with the gal before going to bed
in a hot fucking house
that
all the beads of sweat evaporated
in
the
matter of minutes ..

just a little bit of wet
on the head
and
her
red hot vagina
would have burned my fingertips loose
if
I would have
gotten any hotter ..

a
clammy set of balls,
the
walls
are
on fire
and

we stick in the middle to
garner a little
of
the
fan that
doesn't want to work as well as the box had advertised ..

so
fucking
hot
that
the water on the nightstand was boilin' a little
and
the blankets were
blurring into a bed of ashes ..

the delirium
has
set in so
high

that I believe
I

will make a dive into her hot hole

to make

sure

that

I won't forget it when that cold

January

march

comes knocking like a thief in blue cloth on my

hard

hard

front door

big fat fuckin' kitchen

books in hand,
the air smells like echinecea,
while
the
green apples fall to the ground
and
the wires find a way to get stuck back into the air ..

it's midtown in all
that
downtown
can't offer in this town
as
my new white house
on
the corner of Baltimore

stands
as
the
chance
between sanity and insanity

and
all the dripping sweat coming down
the back of
my arms

says
that
I'm going
to

be here

talkin' crazy to a neighbor

that
just stopped in to get
a
jar of mustard
he
forgot

to
pick up for his girl

cravin' a big bite
healthy

hot dog ..

before the lids close

bored kids in the middle of
37th street ..

3 guys,
one girl,
a lighter,
just shadow boxin'
waitin' for the creeps
to disappear
so
they can take
over
&
rule the rest
of
the
over world ..

bantering me about the hood

before leaving work tonight,
a kid
asked me why I don't live in the hood ..

he laughed,
turned his head,
clapped hard
as
I looked on ..

I turned to leave
and
thought
he
just
wouldn't get my address
and
that I do want
to live in that hood ..

under and on the hood
as
the
tap dancers
silently stream by
because
truths are the tails that
leave our ass bare and
free of protrusions ..

August 1, 2002

fan blasting on my face,
the smell of fresh cut grass,
sun on all walls,
the wax has hardened,
plastic spoons for the gold toothed talker,
fast black men walking by,
used cup of overnight water,
the radio works like a carburetor,
trash can looks like a tired mouth ready to shout again,
almost tall enough to reach the fan blade
& short enough to know that all I can afford is the necessities ..

sure,
never had money ..

grew up with none ..

make just enough to pass the test
now ..

guess I've been destined to stay away from it,
the allergies and headaches of it ..

just
too much for this kid to stomach ..

August5th

crosswalk intersection
people wavin' each
other on as
the
next one in flight wants
nothin' more than a burnt
egg sandwich
and
a
way to recoup the losses from Uncle Sam
and get the fuck out of town ..

while the Gulf of Mexico
laughs and the Texans
threat the clown
in the front yard with running make up and
shufflin' feet
lookin' in for a piece of bread
or

a
reason
to
get across the walk
to
cross
the
sidewalk
to
the
place where the trees
look like
sugar cane

and
the distance
looks
like

nothin'
more
than a walk in the
paltry park ..

another lesson in supply and demand

been searchin' for a
new
place to live ..

tryin' to move on down
the lane

as
I call all the ads
and
leads like a reporter looking for
the
smoking gun hidden in the smoke bush ..

on my first visit to walk through an apartment
I got a quote of \$425 on a joint
off Broadway
that had potential ..

I met the old
post artsy-fartsy land lady
with a likely penchant for red wine
and
the minute we stepped foot in
the
place
she
threw a \$200 price hike
on
a
place
when all I can afford
is
yesterdays
rent

sure,
guess I looked like I have money
when
the next guy in line moving down the
street wants to offer me a
free lunch ..

she said
there were no other cheaper properties
and
that I wasn't mistaken bein' in that place ..

makes
me

wonder if there was a hundred stuck to the bottom
of
my shoe
or
if

the caravan for another dollar on the back of Lincoln's hair piece
was
tryin' to poke me in the eyes ..

sure,
a dollar
down
for
an
unearned lie

is
the lesson
we

all
went

through

way back when
school was
just
a
free thing we
all

had to arrive at ..

all the world's a joke

and
everyone is laughin'
as
the
gimp buys a new wide screen TV
and

the hostage
becomes the hijacker ..

something cool in the water
as
the
tide turns into a mouthful of nectarine
while
the
diamond swoops into a sea gull looking
for
the
newest pile of smut on the beach to stick his beak in ..

the battle of
will becomes
the
fight of Kenny
as
the
world turns
into

a
new
bright
blue pond of water ready to tackle
the

imp
needing
something

more in the morning magazine
to
laugh

at

while he forgot to read the report
on
how the whole world is a joke

and
everyone is
laughin'

keepin' you
awake

while you try to battle the prophesy
stuck

in
the
bottle beneath the sand ..

a thing tonight

tucked loosely under
a
forest green
comforter
on
a
90 degree evening
in the buff
as
the crooks rob the criminals
&
the fan slices thru the air like
a
chef ready to chop be up like a carrot stick,
stuff me in a mushroom
and
feed me to the other
vegetables
in
the
oven
pan ..

a mid-line parable

moving the dogs
into
the
tiger's den
as
the cocks fight in the Kentucky sun
and

the only
remaining piece of bread has
turned into a ball of penicillin that will
be shipped off
the
Mongolia
to
cure a kid's viral infection the doctor's can't diagnose ..

bringing in the cats
out of the whale's aquarium
for
the fish are boiling
with curiosity
and

if they
start stringing together the cat's 9 tails of curiosity
there

could be
a
fight

that

will
bring the straights of Tripoli

to a
dry,
flat

end ..

a good kid & some mother

his mom's name is
Missy

and
you can only imagine

what the
hell
is
going on from there ..

sure,
she takes jabs at his chest
and does
her best
to
toss the words
down his ears as though
he
was a Nazi in some previous scheme ..

these
parents that put their kids up on the stand day after day ..

this kid
is
a
good kid

with an 11-year old curiosity about
Europe,
porn,
dirt bikes,
a tranquil swimming pool on a warm day
and

all he wants to do is get away from her ..

if fact,
the kid almost begs to stay over with my lover friend and me
whenever he has
the
chance ..

if there's any
hell that's as hot as it's advertised,
it has to be
the
firm desire to not
be around a mother
&

this kid
has it ..

so,
when he's riding his skateboard
around the city streets at night
with the tall
tall
buildings winking like they know something and the local cops
come to give him
a
warning
for
riding along the sidewalk

they're nicer than the
mother could
ever be

and
actually give him some kind of reinforcement
for
doing something he digs ..

so,
young man,
keep fucking up the sidewalks
and
streets

cause
you're

going to be all right

and
it's the top bunk for you whenever you want it,
kid ..

a chance so often

you've had your chance,
while the bowlers
took their
lead and aimed at the high
cockatiels in the sky ..

sure,
you had your opportunity as
the kid
with a stack of handlebars and
somewheres to be went on by
and through the stop sign
with
no hands to hold onto his grip ..

lands of opportunity,
cars swishing by the Main street
and
the burrito eaters
are
ready to go back to their well ventilated homes
with
closed shades

and open conversations about things
they won't remember

even
when called on
it

or
brought to clarity by the bottle ..