



# Joe files LXX

a word in the wind  
is  
a  
ship in the shaving cream can

## overhearing overhead

the girls talk about  
bein' safe ..

sure,  
no danger ..

the danger could break skin  
or  
the new man's heart ..

pushin' the pawn to the edge  
of a knife blade  
as  
the  
music slams and there's no where  
to escape the heat when it's coffee,  
80 plus degree night  
and  
the sounds and sights of traveling magicians goin' round ..

sure,  
the 1st thing this girl needs  
is danger as  
her friends huddle around the bishop  
taunting the queen and  
her small tits ..

high tide drift  
and low plains electricity,  
the show is ready to start  
as  
the girl loses her king  
again  
&  
starts bleeding to the sound of September 1st approaching ..

## paying off the landlord

I go over  
several days before the first,  
the 27th to be exact,  
to pay my landlord next months rent ..

he's on the back porch without a shirt,  
front teeth  
or  
inhibitions  
as  
we  
talk about an insane neighbor,  
which is the only slight hitch  
of  
livin' in the new home I rent from ..

a grand little white castle  
on  
the  
corner of 37th ..

we talk about some  
gang banger kid that lives in  
the Montclair  
who  
pulled out a gun and started shooting into the clean  
air of a Saturday afternoon ..

emptied two rounds from a 9MM gun into the air  
as  
I found out later over trash in the streets ..

he was tire of all the crack activity in the  
neighborhood  
and  
decided to sound his urban horns ..

so,  
my neighbor called the fuzz in on him  
and  
now the kid is trying to terrorize my  
neighbor  
Chad,  
who is a good kid ..

he cackles him  
with fake gun shots as he walks to his car ..

because  
Chad is gonna have to testify in court

and  
likely send him to what Chad called,  
'THE CLINK'  
for about a week or so ..

so,  
the landlord and I are talking about this punk  
with another tenant that's on the back porch  
sluggin' a beer with  
my  
already drunk landlord ..

my landlord,  
Greg,  
mentioned several times over the conversation  
that  
the kid is going to end up dead or evicted ..

I looked at Greg and tended to believe that he  
would be capable of  
shooting this kid ..

Greg is a crazy drunk  
who recently had a liver transplant  
and  
has the eyes that make one believe that he is capable  
of  
pulling off such a crime ..

so,  
as I leave  
and  
leave behind the stories of city life  
I  
criss cross over my lawn  
so  
as  
to  
not get a nasty sticker weed stuck in  
the  
bottom

of my  
foot  
and

have  
to pull  
another pric

out  
of  
my  
foot  
in  
this

beautiful,  
dastardly

neighborhood stuck  
square  
in

the middle  
of  
the  
hood

that is home  
for  
now ..

## **pit the pitters**

girls ready to  
fight  
blow-by-bow  
as pride  
comes over the  
faces  
&  
trees to attack your home ..

kids ready to play with every toy in the box  
as  
the pride stays buried  
&  
the music gets louder by the second ..

the squabbles of gettin' older  
when all we want to know is  
how  
may bomb pops are in  
your  
box ..

## **some sounds**

I think I'm hearing sounds,  
radio up,  
a clank in the other room  
or a sound from the entryway I couldn't account for ..

the night of delirium  
and the day of foretold rumors,  
the night is fresh,  
we are  
alive ..

all trapped beneath love's tooth  
and  
hate's first breath  
of  
a  
pretty little morning ..

**sure, sure**

women in front of  
the church  
pick over the flower spread as  
George Robb's screams of  
Americana approaching ..

2 taps from the dance  
and a waltz into the trick,  
its the time of the season  
and  
higher time for the sun to go away for the night ..

all safe and sound  
for the trumpet man  
to  
sleep in the  
back of the  
well groomed church ..



*tamer bowl of nuts*

hotter  
than a viper  
as  
the  
kid asks to ride with  
me  
wherever I'm going ..

I'm not even sure  
where I'm going,  
I tell the kid . .

I don't care,  
he comes back,  
I'm goin' ..

so,  
his Mom tells him that they are  
going to the store  
and that is  
the  
end of  
that  
story

as  
the  
winds  
blow  
a  
bit  
and

the heat  
doesn't  
feel that bad after  
all ..

\*\*

cop drive by's in  
patty wagons,  
boys doing a reverse  
to go the same direction in  
the  
intersection  
in front of  
the  
new house ..

sure,  
some tougher shit goin' down here in  
the  
neighborhood  
as  
the  
man in reverse comes back into view  
and  
whips his car around  
in  
the other direction ..

the other night,  
I was drivin' to meet the gal at her  
place down the street  
when  
I see cop coming down 36th  
in a lazy stroll,  
he stops suddenly,  
punches reverse hard and lays some  
tread  
to  
get a crook that is darting down Baltimore ..

the cop stops his car  
after thrusting forward a bit  
and  
gets  
on foot to  
grab the guy ..

I see him struggle,  
the put the arms behind the man's  
back ..

sure,  
the streets are tough  
but  
an old timer just  
walked by in an open white collared shirt  
on  
a  
lazy stroll

as  
the  
family Volvo went by with  
a  
camper shell on top ..

families,  
walkers  
and  
crime

back in  
the  
hood

as  
the  
heat  
continues to  
make  
this  
KC crowd nuts

and  
more ready than ever to crack open  
that  
bowl

of walnuts

sittin' right  
in  
the  
middle of the  
intersection of 37th and Me ..

## the famous local bum & I

makin' friends around  
town,  
I am ..

the other day,  
went by a bookstore  
in  
a  
semi-ritzy part of town  
where  
a guy by the handle of 'JERRY'  
sits  
out on the sidewalk with a  
cup

asking people for money ..

it's well known through word of mouth  
and  
a  
national news magazine segment profile  
that  
the man  
makes about 50 grand a year  
doin' this,  
drives a Cadillac,  
owns a home  
and  
has nothing but a mouthful of bad teeth to  
make one believe that he's actually  
in  
need of money ..

sure  
the teeth are some kind of sympathetic facade ..

so,  
I go by with a friend the other day,  
our intern in the back seat,  
tell them the story and  
prove it to them about 'JERRY' ..

as we go on by at about 15 MPH,  
I roll the window  
down and  
ask  
him,  
"HEY, HAVEN'T I SEEN YOU ON 20/20. YEA, IT WAS 20/20 .. DIDN'T I SEE YOU."

He whips around,  
leaving his potential customers in a lurch

and  
gives me one hell of  
a  
fucking flip off ..

face scrunched,  
probably scared off his momentary customers ..

sure,  
just drivin' around like  
a  
crime buster  
making

friends with the  
phonies ..

## the original counterfeiters

watch it,  
the cheaters  
are looking over  
your shoulder ..

careful,  
the plagiarists  
want your words  
and  
are finding a way to steal  
your thoughts ..

look out,  
the two faces look like one  
as you silently piss  
along in your bathroom  
as  
a  
stranger you may have casually  
glanced at before steals your  
urine  
sample ..

tread carefully  
in the dirt because  
they are collecting your footprints  
as  
evidence ..

talk with distinction  
because the tapes are rolling ..

beat the beasts at  
chess  
and outtalk the loud mouths  
with integrity ..

the frauds are abound  
like counterfeit bills  
as  
I approach the new,  
savory entrance to the highway  
that is little used  
& run over the counterfeiters  
lost wallet  
and wonder no more  
about them  
as  
the idea starts knockin' ..

## the rare here and after

head  
pounding  
from  
menthol  
and  
hops ..

it's going on 4PM  
and  
been  
some  
time since  
I have  
needed a

portion of the next day  
to  
shake  
the  
sparks from the night before ..

one shower,  
one bath,  
the smell of burned wood  
is still in  
my  
hair

like  
the  
signals of  
SOS smoke  
waiting  
for  
a  
garden hose  
to put out the

excitement ..

sure,  
the blanket sprawled  
on the hot morning ground,  
the kid  
wants to put a hook on a  
fishing pole  
to  
catch invisible fish  
around  
the previous evening fire ..

I tell him it's  
not  
a  
good idea

because he may  
hook me,  
him  
or  
someone else  
walking

by  
innocent like

not  
wanting to

take the  
residue

of  
a  
pounding head

and  
the sight of silver fish  
swimming

down the  
mouth  
of  
a  
silent  
mouth

looking for  
the  
jazz messengers  
to  
stop sending  
such

loud signals ..



## they're firin' at me

sometimes  
it's  
better to laugh  
at  
your enemies than  
to  
be afraid ..

a timid,  
good kid in the program the other day  
told me that he  
was  
up at the library and ran into a guy  
that said  
he  
just sued me ..

what,  
I asked,  
who was this kid?

he tried to explain,  
I didn't know ..

then,  
I asked my co-worker and he  
told me who it was ..

I had to laugh ..

it was some insane older  
kid trying to pawn phones off on the kids  
and  
get down the pants of kids way the fuck younger  
than him  
in  
what he was proposing as acts  
of  
pure  
slam down sex ..

we had to give him the boot ..

he called that evening a number of times  
and  
my co-worker and I feigned a number of aliases  
to hear what this kid had to say ..

at one time he was his dad,  
another time a parole officer pleading he get back  
into our youth program or that

he would be put back in juvenile detention ..

apparently he went back  
and  
is talkin' about shit he's never done ..

he'll never even know how to go about suing me,  
let alone have the wherewithal to  
come up with  
a  
valid case  
to  
sue me on ..

a playful little fuck  
that  
roves around as an enemy  
as

I wish for a chance to wave at him  
while  
driving down the main  
drag  
while  
he

tries to remember my name,  
get confused  
and  
call an imaginary lawyer in his mind  
to

sue himself for being a flat jackass ..

good night ..

## thrivin' Ivanhoe

veer off the highway  
on 39th Street ..

out east ..

not much going on as I sit at  
the  
red light  
and  
notice  
banners hanging off the  
light poles that say  
'THRIVING IVANHOE NEIGHBORHOOD' ..

all the businesses are boarded up ..

figuring it's just one block,  
I pull up to the next light  
and  
another strip of businesses boarded up,  
along with residences ..

shit,  
it's thrivin' around here all right ..

must  
be nice  
to get away with such a white  
lie

as  
the  
next two lights and blocks look  
boarded up also ..

the plans,  
the plans  
folk

have  
to  
live up to their

word  
and  
behind their shield

of slogans

there  
in

THRIVIN' IVANHOE .

## **tonight USA**

yuppies playing beach volleyball  
as the raquetballs go flat,  
nothin' to lean on,  
even the walls are gone ..

just a city of  
noises  
and  
talk that can make sense  
provided you  
have enough to drink ..

the lonely guys are out as the stragglers  
straggle  
tonight ..

## **tonightmorro**

window rattlin',  
still stopped in debt,  
work doesn't exist,  
the woman is my hope  
as  
luck  
remains the whiskey I  
don't drink  
in  
this gin glass ..

## tow neck

he pulled his car into the spot ..

a supped up Acura,  
new 18 inch silver shiny rims,  
animal skins over the seats,  
air fresheners inside danglin' just so from the rear view,  
ball glued on top of antenna ..

probably sat down for his first drink  
when the back wheels  
were loaded up in the  
tow truck's bed ..

then,  
the front wheels were upended to be taken down to  
the clank to clink about ..

oh  
and the bright orange sticker  
on the side of the passenger window  
deeming  
that he was pinched ..

done,  
no care,  
poor bastard probably  
go too liquored up to know exactly what or where  
the when  
went on with why?

enjoy it pal,  
the lot is closed on Sundays  
&  
that cab fare is more than all your  
drinks and hers on that  
hot,  
sultry Saturday evening in  
the  
city ..

## traveling poor

when you're poor  
enough to realize it and  
laugh about it  
with your lover  
or  
a  
co-worker  
or  
a  
stranger,  
it's right to devise  
at-home ways to vacation when not ..

have  
a  
box of 100 prints of the most famous paintings of all time ..

keep them in the kitchen  
to look at over coffee in  
the  
morning  
to  
get my mind to South America,  
India  
or  
the  
Bermuda coast,  
it Europe isn't in the box ..

also,  
I have 1 coin in each ledge in the  
living room  
from various regions of the globe ..

I have pounds,  
francs,  
lire  
and  
the such  
hanging in the sun  
and  
getting dirtied  
by  
the  
vices of the street and  
soot that is slowly filtering off the  
window screen and frame  
into  
the  
room and onto the floor ..



it's the little ways  
that  
make staying about  
and  
around here

feel like  
a  
place

you may be able to smash your finger on  
if  
you close your eyes tight enough  
and  
have

the  
juice  
to  
squeeze yourself  
into  
that

coach  
seat

to  
the center of an old,  
yellowed  
print with a pocketful  
of  
cheap  
European coins ..

## **vote for all candidates**

he's flappin' his arms,  
jowl  
& feet goin' down the street ..

a portly man with  
glacier glasses on tight,  
dreamin' of the movies  
&  
waitin' for the next big thing  
to happen as  
the man  
on the sidewalk ..

a stock and  
bond lookin' guy  
stops,  
looks back at a political sign ad stuck  
in the grass  
and  
just  
as quickly forgets  
in  
the  
Tuesday elections coming up  
and  
forgets why he'd  
doesn't vote  
no more ..

## **writing for more**

some writers group up East has  
been sending me  
mail for over 7-8 years  
to pay for their writing seminar  
to learn all the tricks of getting published ..

every time they spell my name wrong ..

JOE JIMINO ..

Not a chance,  
folks ..

the proof ate  
that bowl of  
pudding ..

8-13-2002

a fired boss,  
light 9:01 a.m. rain,  
the purple flowers on the back fence  
are like  
eyes lookin'  
back at the stray animals of the mall days ..

better lies  
are  
covered again ..

## 10AM HEAT RAISE

she lugs the basket of laundry  
as the little black princess  
carries  
the  
detergent up the  
street  
to  
the 'LOST SOCK' ..

early Wednesday laundry,  
the day after Tuesday  
and  
the  
coffee still strives to get  
a little better in this place ..

people drive much slower around here  
in  
the  
morning than in the afternoon ..

not so much looking forward to work,  
they  
go at their own pace  
as  
the swift drug users of the street walk  
about as fast as the cars ..

pacing,  
lookin' about  
at a new thing or for some action ..

this,  
as the violin player  
tightens her string  
and  
the  
tuba man in the back galley  
waits

for his  
turn  
to  
blow everything  
he  
has into  
his  
3 note

injection

into  
this  
day  
as  
the  
old man stops in  
the  
middle of the street  
to  
pick up  
what looks  
like a silver coin,  
but  
turns out  
to  
be  
a  
clever bottle  
  
cap ..

11 .. 2002

been thinkin' about  
9-11 this year ..

reading scant articles  
on national changes  
&  
thinking about how it went down while  
I was  
out of the country last year ..

last eve,  
I had a dream that  
reduced me to a classroom and  
former job ..

I stared out sitting in a classroom,  
felt like high school,  
before the bell rang  
I started welling up with tears over  
the fact that  
Sept. 11 of this year  
was coming up so close ..

then,  
I had to get ready to go  
to work as a stock boy ..

while there,  
it was painful to think about  
bein' in Europe last year at the same time  
and  
in the US this year ..

my lover friend,  
came up to the store to give me a 9-11 gift pack ..

she wanted to know when were going to move in  
together  
as I wondered  
about the bananas that were low  
to the floor  
and  
how we  
move  
on  
from now ..

12:36 at 3644

car alarms,  
banana bread,  
fans on an old red swivel chair,  
London announcer chatterin',  
a worn out dictionary of words,  
no cases for my pillows,  
a ripped open condom packet,  
a millipede crawling over a book called 'JIM, THE WONDER DOG',  
the statue in the sill from a boy I know well,  
3 floors high as the car alarm squeals,  
lights flashing,  
then leave,  
the pen leaves razor burn as  
the black comedian  
rightfully throws chaw  
at the white establishment,  
readin' about a psychic dog,  
my glasses are worse off than a lost penny  
as the world looks beautiful  
and  
the crooked ground is even more splendid than my  
crooked floor  
in  
this converted attic ..



#4,145

flakes of paint under my nails  
stand  
as  
the easier of dirt to shake  
while  
the shovel remains  
lost  
&  
the mound of mulch out front  
looks like  
an  
enormous pile of  
tasty peanut  
brittle or  
Chic 'O Sticks ..

#6,214

Main St. looks  
and  
sounds dead  
&  
the last of  
Wed. morn.  
cars drift by ..

drifters out tonight  
as  
the last of the corn has been popped  
&  
the final journal entry is submitted  
to  
the  
sleeping publishers ..

8-14-2002

it wouldn't really  
matter,  
would it?

sail the ship,  
run the stop sign,  
fly off the edge of a cliff,  
tell me about Renoir,  
get certified in life guarding,  
paint the room peach,  
make a box of candles,  
jump over an alligator's mouth,  
do  
anything  
never  
done before ..

just  
want you to know  
that  
were all going to jovially go  
down  
as  
bein' flat  
full of shit ..

## **a face to wake-up by**

the man with the burned face,  
burn sienna skin,  
no nose  
in the mini-van behind me ..

his van is spittin' out exhaust,  
he's on my tail ..

woke my ass out of a heat daze  
and  
trailed me for a block or more ..

only saw his face at a stop sign drivin' by,  
nothin' more after that ..

couldn't shake the image ..

glazed over windows with bright sun  
glaring it over more ..

he veered  
down state line  
to  
wake  
up  
the rest of the block ..

that man  
without a face  
but  
the  
most strikin'  
face

around here ..

## **a full day**

late night screams,  
a white police car lookin' vehicle tears off,  
lover's angry,  
can't understand,  
a female voice says loud into the early AM ..

'IF I NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN IT'LL BE A FUCKIN' DAY TOO SOON.'

this is all right with me  
as  
I hear the guy throw up to the window a hearty 'FUCK OFF' ..  
  
the night is complete ..

## a prophet in a wheelchair

We  
all start  
to  
get thirsty  
walking  
around  
Lawrence  
yesterday ..

we go into a coffee house  
to get the kid a lemonade  
and  
a  
coke for us ..

we have no cash,  
they don't take credit cards ..

so,  
I hop into the bar next door,  
avoiding the afternoon dart throwers,  
get the money  
and  
meet my lover and her boy in the stroller  
in front of the coffeehouse next to ..

then,  
the girl goes into the  
bar to get money of her own ..

she came out without a  
hole on her person,  
we both  
escaped the Sunday afternoon dart show ..

after collecting the cash,  
the boy  
wanted to go into the used sporting goods shop  
in front of us ..

his mom takes him in  
as she hands over a  
hand rolled smoke ..

little reprieve  
with the tobacco ..

I look up and  
down the block

and  
notice an old timer in a wheelchair  
looking a  
hole  
through my head ..

then,  
I notice about a minute later that he's out on the sidewalk  
staring  
straight at me ..

waiting for him to wheel up and  
tell me  
that  
he's tired of us hippie lookin' people  
smokin' strange  
grass  
on  
the  
open sidewalk,  
then  
I tell him it's actually a rolled cigarette ..

so,  
from my peripheral I notice him  
ambling right up  
to me  
with legs and arms  
slicing the air to get closer ..

he stops about a foot away to my left  
and  
I notice the stump that is his right leg  
and  
wondered what war  
or  
event went down to get this man to this spot ..

so,  
he stops and  
peers with squinted eyes beneath a big pair of UV protectors  
and  
says,  
'YOU GOT PROBLEM, SON' ..

'EXCUSE ME,'  
I reply.  
'WHAT PROBLEMS.'

He inhales a big gulp of sunshined air,  
peers closer into my eyes  
and  
says  
again  
simply,  
'YOU GOT PROBLEMS.'

'YEA,'  
I come back.  
'WHAT PROBLEMS.'

He looks away,  
up,  
around,  
back into my eyes and  
shakes his head ..

it's a hard question  
with a surprising response,  
I'm sure ..

he says,  
'YOU GOT PROBLEMS.'

at this time  
my lover and her son come back out of the sporting goods store ..

the kid hops in the stroller  
and the girl looks at me while I talk to the man  
in the wheelchair ..

'LOOK,'  
I begin.  
'YOU APPROACHED ME ABOUT HAVIN' PROBLEMS. I DIDN'T APPROACH YOU. WHAT  
PROBLEMS WOULD PROMPT YOU  
TO COME UP TO A COMPLETE STRANGER AND PROFESS SUCH A THING?'

The man looks over and  
asks,  
'IS THAT YOUR DAUGHTER?'

'NO,'  
I come back.  
'IT'S MY GIRLFRIEND AND HER SON.'

He looks at the boy  
and says,  
'HI HONEY. AREN'T YOU A GOOD LOOKIN' ONE.'

The boy squirms hard away from the trail of mouth vapor  
coming out of  
his  
drunken person ..

The girl looks at me and says  
that they will be over at the  
ice cream shop across the street ..

I motion that I'll be there in  
a brief minute ..

So,



I whip back over on the guy and ask him what the story is ..

He apologizes and says that he feels bad for interrupting my day and that I should join what I have because he doesn't have anything ..

further,  
he begins telling me about how he has problems ..

'SURE, PAL,'  
I assure him.  
'SO, DO I. YOU KNOW, WE ALL HAVE PROBLEMS ON VARYING DEGREES, BUT WHY DID YOU PICK ME OUT OF ALL THE PEOPLE THAT HAVE WALKED BY YOU THROUGHOUT THE DAY TO SAY THAT I HAVE PROBLEMS.'

He steps back from his original plan  
and  
says that he's sorry for disturbing me  
and that he would like to get to know me ..

I tell him,  
'MY NAME IS JOE,  
WHAT IS YOURS?'

He tells me it's VERN  
as we shake hands  
and  
he looks down as though he  
lost the simple street battle ..

'YOU'RE A GOOD KID,'  
he begins.  
'I WOULD LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU.'

I tell him that I wouldn't mind getting to know him either ..

cats like this always have a good satchel of stories,  
stories about ex's,  
wars,  
accidents,  
beauty,  
the rapture  
and  
all the other ..

I tell the street swami VERN in a wheelchair  
that I have to go,  
good luck  
and  
shake his hand  
as  
he starts to tell me why he stopped me ..

'I SAW YOUR LONG HAIR,'

he began,

'LOOK AT ME. I DON'T HAVE HARDLY ANY HAIR AT ALL. YOU LOOKED LIKE THE REST OF THEM.'

Then he started trailing on into a drunken speech  
that was hard to keep up with ..

must have been reverting back to the earlier days of health,  
vitality

and

women

as

he

looks at a group of young girls flock by and just mutters,

'I WISH' ..

this man

and

his open with list as

he

changes his complete demeanor

and

I bid him my 'adios'

and walk over

to the ice cream shop ..

the boy has a little cup of water for me

and

begins jumpin' a bit for

the

cone of cotton candy ice cream that is on the way ..

this,

as another handful of cotton candy balloons

get released into

the Kansas air

to no doubt

land

in

my lap again

and

I'll stick to my line of  
questioning ..

as

the

man in the wheelchair

continues

to

find

the

answer

on

the  
sidewalks  
of Lawrence  
and

a  
mending America ..

## apologies for the forgettin'

half the time  
I sit  
here ready to  
write about  
the  
nuisances and  
scenes,  
scenarios  
I see throughout the day

and  
draw a blank ..

nothing ..

full of stories,  
images,  
the bugs on the sidewalk,  
a junkie hopping into a navy blue taxi cab,  
the bare footed woman on a Saturday night hitchhiking on the worst stretch of 39th,  
the bowl of noodles made for the dragons fiery breath,  
the open legs and growing flowers,  
the yield signs fighting the stop signs for supremacy,  
a cop stopping to pull over the pushers with sugar in their Wheaties,  
the movies I didn't have to rent,  
the books I didn't have to check-out and  
no  
more late fees ..

this one  
makes up for  
all the stories  
I didn't get around  
to  
writing about ..

all of them,  
in the last week ..

need to make a habit of  
this ..

just  
to  
say  
I  
don't apologize  
for  
telling  
you

that  
I'm trying here  
as

the  
critics compliment  
and  
the  
pessimists beautify

while  
the  
optimist  
makes

this  
story possible  
as  
the  
fire licks  
her  
thighs  
and

makes  
the  
cold  
a  
doubt

we will never  
be able to quite  
write  
or  
figure about ..

*back in de hood*

errant  
women walking by  
on  
flanks of sidewalk ..

lookin' side  
to  
side,  
back,  
front,  
around  
to see what the noise is all about ..

York is singing about  
the years of waiting  
&  
nothin' happenin' ..

there's shit happenin'  
in front  
of  
the  
house  
standing alone on the corner ..

as  
the  
women empty the vacuum bags,  
stranglehold bags of stuff to the place,  
hop over manholes,  
flop off curbs,  
flop up curbs  
and  
listen to all the noises ..

turn around,  
do  
you  
hear  
it ..

cause  
after all these years  
the  
noise  
is  
back  
again

in full fuckin' course,  
shadow  
and  
light ..

## beginning of the soliloquy

middle of  
the  
saber's tooth jab,  
beside  
the  
fire warming what is already warmed  
as  
the  
violence goes and comes this week ..

people wielding guns,  
fists,  
glass,  
razor claws,  
the cost of financing,  
the debt of American Embassies,  
your crotch,  
the next to last kernel on the corn on the cob,  
a panda's last request of the day,  
my second sip of cold beer,  
the ugly girl who is amazing in bed,  
the last snag of the pinkie toe's nail,  
your missile stuck in the attic,  
the dove's poem in a pigeon's song,  
the smell of deodorant in a room of rotting stench,  
the tiny belly dancer who lost too much weight last summer,  
the walker going like a runner by the mid noon glow,  
your tooth brush pointed at an innocent neck,  
the dentist trying to take a fencing lesson,  
our reason in the age of insanity,  
and  
nothing more

here  
to  
be writtin' because  
we  
wouldn't want  
to  
put anything  
more  
in  
harm's fuckin' way ..



## **blazin' bullet proof**

vacant stores,  
empty phone calls,  
we should have know this was going  
to  
happen ..

the President ready  
to bomb Iraq again,  
the price of clean gasoline  
remains steady as the new  
couple looks for a home in  
the  
burbs ..

hot peanut butter,  
blundered prayers  
and  
that Sept. 10th coming sooner than later  
as  
people are back to being bitter  
in offices  
&  
roadways ..

here we are in another tour of duty lookin'  
at the barrel of yet another  
not  
sure if there is a bullet in the  
chamber or not ..

~ ' ~

nothin' like  
tile  
when all you need is a sheet of  
plastic  
to cover  
the  
meat  
&  
keep the freezer burn out  
the  
front door ..

## delivery intent

phone lady,  
the gay bike riders,  
water delivery,  
coffee express,  
lost walkie talkies,  
the backward march of salmon fish,  
her bra neatly hung in my closet,  
the voices of loudness up on Wyandotte,  
someone's painting in a thrift shop waitin' to be sold for \$2.99,  
the humanity in leaving the purple flower alone,  
the refreshment in one good gin & tonic,  
the first plane leaving the runway pavement towards the sky,  
the soap intended for a dirty kid's mouth,  
the rituals that run into habit,  
most dogs are smarter than humans and this includes cats as well,  
undelivered chap books in my living room chair as readers in a coffeehouse have well forgotten my name  
by now,  
a soiled rejection slip from a journal in Chattanooga has been a mighty nice coaster for my cold, sweaty  
drink,  
cute girls on the cover of a morning magazine,  
the coca-cola sold a bit ago in the Plaza de Spagna as the runway model tripped  
down the famous steps leading to the cement boat,  
though she may have fell into her future husband,  
kid with knee high socks and a red bike pushing his abused piece up 37th St.,  
readying for a trip to Minnesota and a taste of a whole new language and water that is so cold I could stick  
my hand in a bucket  
of ice cubs for a preview,  
the bad vagina is open and ready for the dirty dick to investigate,  
yellow covers because red was taken,  
a brand new violin is one of the most beautiful instruments that remain new and untouched,  
old notes scrawled on the back of matchbooks as the postcards remain unsent and it's just too much to buy  
an outdated stamp ..

plus,  
all of this won't fit on  
one postcard and if I was to send you anything,  
it would have to be one postcard ..

but,  
I will shove this in an envelope,  
wait for next pay period,  
buy some gas,  
put it in your mailbox and  
you will  
know  
what I and  
the  
morning of August 19 - 2002 was up to ..

**did you want it?**

I had to make part of  
the decision  
as the sun was still high that day ..

up and down it went  
&  
I still made part of the decision,  
but  
low down we felt as the air thickened ..

not whether you wanted it  
or not,  
but  
are you still satisfied with the  
decision  
as  
late summer breaks ..

people reelin' weary,  
the way winds ..

did you want it?

because I'm sure  
I want  
the next one,  
honey ..

## diva versus rock

traces of hard  
rock  
as  
Nina Simone  
waits  
for  
her chance to step up to the microphone ..

by the time she does,  
most of the crowd has filtered out ..

yet,  
when she starts belting out the  
smooth,  
solid  
vocal silk,  
the crowd of hard  
bangers  
stick  
around

and  
people walking by the club front  
with sidewalk speakers turn  
high  
and  
large

start coming through the door ..

filtering  
in,  
not saying  
a  
word ..

looking  
at  
the  
real act of the night ..

a singer  
wearing make-up to attract the guys,  
not the media magnets

and  
telling  
of

a

month before

when her  
man

wouldn't stick  
around

no more

even  
when

she started singing  
the  
tunes

that could

keep  
a  
Marine

clean ..

## end of the month ticket

man pulling up  
slowly to the stop sign  
as  
the  
Mexican man in the red thunderbird  
looks  
around lost,  
while  
the  
cyclist heads south  
on Baltimore ..

away from  
the  
speeding cars  
and  
cops

not interested in giving  
out  
tickets in this neck of the woods ..

they want the big  
prize ..

a bon-o-fide arrest,  
cell bars

and

the fat chance  
at  
catching that big  
urban fish

eating all the small  
fish

without  
a  
permit  
or

valid reason ..

## **everyone's question**

where is she  
at when  
the last gasp is exhaled on the night?

where will she be when  
you breath like  
a wounded chimpanzee?

where will she be  
when the food has run out?

how will she react when the top has been  
touched?

will she be there  
when the dry well has been tapped?

how will she know when the glow is nothin'  
but extinguished  
candle smell?

has she been there in  
the past  
&  
how could she know what  
has down?

she just arrived as the lighter  
was flicked?



## feet lotion & sanded wood

stuck to the bottle just enough  
to know what it does  
to me ..

pulled away from the nipple  
long enough to know just  
how much they  
excite me ..

penning over the words  
to know just how much the  
paint and pictures  
hit  
the populace ..

keeping only a guitar pick in my place  
to remind  
me how I want to pick up the ax  
with proficiency some day ..

keeping the TV off most of the day  
to remind my  
why it deserves much more  
to be off than on ..

not n the phone that much  
to get me back to writing old fashioned letters  
to my lover  
and  
old friends ..

just havin' a couple puffs off the rolled cigarette  
to remind me  
how tired to the habit one  
can get by buying pack after pack of \$3-4 cigarettes  
while  
the humdrum kids  
get beaten by the  
sweaty sun ..

laughin' next to a bottle  
of skin therapy lotion  
as  
I muster the energy to sand  
the  
fuck out of this new coffee table  
beside my chapped  
and  
dirty feet ..

## **finally cool outside tonight ..**

people are running,  
walking,  
catching up with new vices,  
kissing their grits to the plate,  
strutting on in leather,  
welcoming their good-by's as hellos,  
letting the deck get some action,  
riding their bikes like they will beat the winds,  
licking sugar with their whole tongue  
and  
filling the tub  
with  
pearls for the cool,  
relaxing  
charm  
that  
water

usually  
has  
when

it's flat  
fuckin'  
hot

here in this town by  
a  
long  
distanced bay ..

**flat %**

potted plants,  
the white painted brick that was once red,  
I hear an infestation of Nile virus fever is breakin'  
out in Louisiana,  
how many days will the rockin' chair  
be around  
as  
the  
goof goes off on another trip  
&  
the ram rods  
stick around to see what is next ..

## **glass pop anthem**

when you meet your match in a mate,  
you  
have  
met  
your match  
in yourself  
and  
isn't that  
what

all this talk of love  
in  
the  
books,  
songs,  
paintings  
and  
billboards  
is

certainly all about .. ?

**go get it & get fucked**

big girl,  
little dog,  
where you goin'  
as  
the  
boilin' turns into water  
and the clock melts into the wanin' sun ..

god barkin',  
dog barkin',  
don't you know the man  
around the corner is a vet and preacher,  
not of the animal and religion sort,  
but of the war and guns ..

cold be sketchin' together a  
death wish now ..

loud car,  
little motor,  
goin' to pick up your girl for a little of the same ..

small attraction,  
big sex drive,  
where you goin'  
to  
turn  
when  
you  
finally get fucked?

## God & the Bridge Woman

Jesus Christ Loves You  
and  
God at Work  
signs I see  
several times a week  
at  
several spots around the city ..

I always think  
of  
one lady when I see that ..

it's the construction lady on  
the  
bridge ..

sweeping,  
wheel barreling,  
sweeping more,  
hauling the boy's trash  
on  
the  
4 lane highway ..

she always has a bonnet around her head,  
hard to see her face,  
easy to see her  
mob of hair shooting out the top of her  
head ..

just sweepin',  
the hardest worker and  
only female on the site ..

you don't have to see her face  
to  
notice the strain ..

makin' some scratch to feed a mouth  
or  
more  
as  
I get off on Washington and see  
a  
converted gas station  
that is out of business  
and  
the  
stagnate sign that used to flash gas  
prices

shout  
loud  
'JESUS CHRIST LOVES YOU' ..

then,  
on the way home from work  
with  
a  
house on Wyandotte  
saying,  
'GOD AT WORK' ..

I think  
of  
the  
little angel  
at  
work on I-70  
and

all  
the  
people here and away  
that  
love

everything about  
that  
little  
worker  
on  
a  
Kansas  
bridge ..

## GREEN VISION

green walker on  
the porch,  
green vines growing on the wall,  
green rugs under the sink,  
green grass in the middle of August,  
green in her shoes,  
green in a leaf of brand new spinach,  
green in the old guy's suspenders,  
green on the tail of the helicopter doing circles above  
the hood,  
green in the words of a teenager's lie,  
green in the parachute man falling off the painting,  
green in the tree painted on the coffee table,  
green in the left big toe nail of the lawn manicurist,  
green is the pencil the girl artist sketches madly with 2 houses down,  
green in the dog's late bark,  
green no where on the mug I drink from,  
green in the details we miss driving up the block,  
green in the crooked street sign,  
green on the visor as she quickly moves on by on the sidewalk,  
green in the bird's beak going for miles to the next block,  
green in the paper that most the city has already read,  
green in the missile the Middle Eastern town is planning to launch in 10 years,  
green in the straps of her Japanese hat as she goes by in a pink dress,  
green in my cigarette that keeps going out ..

and  
green  
in  
the  
proof  
that

wafts from this  
room  
on  
the  
yellowest morning I have seen yet ..

sure,  
we're all  
mixed in and draped in blue ..



## **gunnin' down the colorful computer enemy**

the kid,  
his robot game he want me to help  
him hop the elevator,  
kill the robots  
and  
jump on to the other side ..

Scooby Doo in the back ground,  
luke warm coffee  
and  
he wants to hop on my lap to  
get a closer glimpse of me  
getting  
him  
on  
to the next level ..

the next level ..

a  
way around the current  
scene,  
he cries when he has to stop the game  
to  
take a bath  
or  
go to bed ..

he just wants to see what color all  
the  
levels after the yellow he's on  
looks like ..

doesn't care much  
that he could conquer the game,  
he just wants to see more colors  
as  
we explain that there are more colors  
outside,  
in a bath  
and  
in his dreams ..

dudn't matter ..

wants to see  
how many colors  
this video game can  
give  
him

as  
the  
day marches  
into more day

and  
he  
sits there on my  
lap  
as

the most  
perfect creation

in  
a  
long line  
of  
level  
upon  
level  
upon  
level  
full

of  
vibrant colors,  
doll ..

## **her timing**

where is she at when the last gasp is exhaled on the night?  
Where will she be when you breathe  
Like a wounded chimpanzee ..

Where will she be when the food has run out?

How will she react when the tip has been touched?

When will she be there when the dry well has been tapped?

How will she know when the glow is nothin' but  
Extinguished candle exhaust?

Has she been there in the past  
And how could she know what has gone down?

She just arrived as  
The lighter  
Was  
Just flicked  
Hot  
And  
Yellowish orange ..

## **in the den of a writer's barrel of monkeys ..**

walls  
and  
space  
and  
a converted attic  
with a small desk  
and  
a  
computer with a view of the street ..

hit the  
bowl of nectarines  
here  
to  
see and comment on what has been seen  
and  
commented by  
a  
whole lot of loony  
chalked up motherfuckers ..

but,  
it's my turn  
and  
I'm going to spin this merry-go-round  
around  
as  
tight as the rubber band will go  
until  
it  
rips its threads loose  
and  
snap into  
shreds of  
pieces ..

oh wait,  
I heard it again ..

a hot bed  
of  
activity in  
those  
rooms high up there in that white house  
with  
flaking paint on the corner ..

it's the house of commentary,  
the mode of modulation,  
the subject of subjectivity  
and

the birthday cake  
with  
a  
field of candle  
I'm going  
to  
let glow  
because  
I need something  
to  
see by and

it's not  
this kid's birthday yet ..

**Just left  
of mid,**

he said,  
as he walked into the  
place ..

looked around  
and  
saw the cat clinging to the couch  
&  
the fan crouching towards the floor ..

sure,  
said the bar back,  
so is everyone else around here ..

just a bit left of mid  
and  
we'll keep it at  
that  
before we go on further ..

## land livin'

the landlords are around the corner,  
covered by a bit of several trees,  
they can see ..

hear if they have to  
which way  
the  
square is bein' shoved into the circle ..

rarely ever see them about,  
though I see a US flag wavin'  
and sometimes  
a  
cough of two from the man ..

covered by little  
and shielded from all,  
the price of privacy as  
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba  
gets ready for a  
tasty little  
lunch  
there

in the southern waters ..

## midnight whore

voice from the top of 37th sounding  
and swiveling like in  
a  
heated argument ..

coming closer,  
all lights out in the place,

I look out and  
see a woman in what seems like a large dirty blond wig  
saying,  
'FUCK IT .. I'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING BU A FUCKING WHORE ..  
THAT'S RIGHT .. A DIRTY FUCKING WHORE.'

I'm looking out of the kitchen window at her going towards the intersection ..

she quiets  
once she reaches the crosswalk ..

pulls up her fabricated pants,  
looks around,  
stops talkin' completely  
and silently goes off  
towards main street ..

you may be right,  
lady,  
you may just  
be right ..



## millimeters near; millimeters away

been sitting  
in front of this window for a  
good portion of  
the day  
into afternoon  
watching the  
the events from  
the  
window  
while typin' ..

had to leave and  
get some keys made  
and food ..

little break from  
the  
typer  
and  
the innards ..

gone for about  
30 minutes,  
pull up,  
see a cop car in front of the place,  
my neighbor on the front porch,  
he waves me over  
and tells me that  
he saw a guy on the corner  
emptying rounds from a 9mm  
into  
the air ..

not at anyone,  
just firin' ..

he called the cops and  
now  
he is going to be subpoenaed  
to testify against  
the  
man with a  
smokin' gun ..

he's good with that ..

and me,  
missing the real action  
while  
my

stomach grumbles  
for  
more

and  
again looking at the quiet,  
calm  
after the storm  
on

the corner of  
this  
neighborhood in  
America  
ready to unravel

once  
I get up from here ..

## **mindin' business**

this shit just happens around here ..

just heard the sound of a bottle crash to the ground,  
an angry black woman in her 40's is yelling motherfucker  
at  
some wiry white guy with  
a  
green shirt,  
gray hair  
and  
white bag in his hand ..

he's ambling hurt  
towards the sidewalk as the woman in the green pants  
is nuts,  
threw a bottle at the mans  
bleeding head ..

the bottle drops unbroken,  
he grabs the back of his head full of blood ..

then,  
two black men with 40's in their hands  
come around the corner in a rush  
and  
yells at the white guy that continues to get pelted with a green bottle  
by the black woman in green pants,  
they yell slight encouragement as him,  
'JUST RUN MAN. GET OUT OF HERE.'

she throws a bottle at him one last time,  
hits him straight in the back ..

he starts running then ..

up the street while  
the back of his head collects more blood  
and  
this  
woman runs off in the other direction ..

there's a brief calm on the intersection of  
37th and Baltimore ..

the three guys are gone,  
hard to say what they fought over ..

the woman was probably a street whore  
that sucked their shriveled dicks and was mad about getting  
fisted for the money

or  
they could have dealt her a bad deck of card ..

either or,  
they are all gone

as I start sipping my coffee  
and  
see the old black gal  
round the corner and start going up the middle of 37th for more action ..

madder than a fuckin' hornet,  
the bee line towards more  
action

melts into the street  
as  
her green pants fade

and  
someone up the street can  
pick up  
this  
saga

where I'm  
going  
to  
leave off ..

RIGHT HERE OFF  
THE CORNER  
OF  
HERE & THEN ..

**more & more around here**

speeding cars,  
pedaling bikes,  
loungy singer  
and

the sweet adoration  
at  
the top of the well

after the bucket  
of  
water rises

and

we see all the potential  
of

quenching  
the  
divine  
right

to  
drink,  
drink  
and  
drink

the fuckin' horn of plenty ..

## one more drag

butterfly nets  
tryin' to  
catch bullets  
this morning as  
my lover friend slips on  
some coveralls ..

the box tells me to keep my fingers  
out of the fan blade  
&  
I dream of how the US is  
gettin' ready to  
attack  
Iraq again ..

the nets are empty,  
yet the bullets continue  
to whiz by in  
some crazy catch of  
consistency  
as  
the  
air feels beyond comfortable  
&  
the coffee tastes the best yet here  
as  
I enter  
week 2 or three  
in  
the  
white house on the corner  
of  
the street's way ..

**open this can of ravioli**

wet day,  
wet pants,  
jumpin' the neighbor's car,  
brown coffee in a brown mug,  
black dirt,  
black ink,  
black wallet  
and all the whites in  
the  
egg and  
these pages, even ..

tomorrow is here  
&  
my car is red  
&  
wet at the news announcer continues  
his marathon of  
new news events  
you've never heard before ..

viva la france  
as  
the  
can opener is all its  
green sits  
peaceful  
&  
restive  
like  
it's ready  
to  
blow my  
lid off  
once again ..

## **our longing wants**

my lungs  
want another tug of smoke,  
my mouth wants the rest of a 16oz. drink,  
my feet want to shuffle,  
my mind wants to write a kite into a punk song,  
my cock wants another bare back ride into her emotional sonnet,  
my lips want more moisture for all that is dry,  
my fingers want to feel the surface of another orange and wonder what it  
feels like ..

my  
knees

want to unbend

into  
where  
you  
are now ..