Poetry Series

Bill Grace

- poems -

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* A Preface To The Poetry Of W. A. Grace

Preface

Perhaps this is my task in life To filter things that touch a soul And to hold the strains till a pen can mold Feeling into form.

* A Prose Quote from Walt Whitman Appropriate to the Spirit of this Blog (1855 Preface to 'Leaves of Grass')

'Through the divinity of themselves shall the kosmos and the new breed of poets be interpreters of men and women and of all events and things. They shall find their inspiration in real objects to-day, symptoms of the past and future....They shall not deign to defend immortality or God or the perfection of things or liberty or the exquisite beauty and reality of the soul. They shall arise in America and be responded to from the remainder of the earth.'

Quoted from 'The Harvard Classics' edited by Charles W, Eliot copyright of 1938 by P. F. Collier & Son Corporation 'Prefaces and Prologues to Famous Books with Introductions and Notes' New York page 407 to 408.

:) Requiem For A New Century (1996)

The strivings on a plain
Unleavened by Thy vision
Mock our pretensions
To learn from history's lessons.
Fragile flames we flicker
Against seven sins that claim us,
Even stars betray us
Into faulty navigation.
No easy course your Gospel
The reader called to spirit
The world too maimed to hear it
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

:) God in Texas

It is said in Texas God once turned a street to gold And as an after thought - stretched soft textured air across a continent -So subtle was the miracle that no one noticed.

In this floating vision there is rumor of another world Realm of singing angels and ancient spirits forever young and whole And the portent of paved streets of gold - New Jerusalem - Infinitely greater than an evening's optical illusion.

:) Education's Object

Barb Markey wisely taught That we are light and shadow. Light and shadow so useful a truth Education's object is to unpack it.

:) Firefly

Firefly
Small your light
It takes the glow of many
To mark the night.
What wisdom do you know,
What can you speak,
Of regions far beyond your realm?
Firefly help me listen
For your whisper in the night.

:) Friendship's Costs

Friendships costs are many but the greatest pain is Discovery of friend as counterfeit: lover, wife, acquaintance, class mate, colleague - it matters not Made of convenience, self, organizational need, usery: The thousand softer metals that never stay the wear of time, The least alluring often proving best.

Be careful in belief of this word - friend.

:) Second Cookie?

Our daughter coming to this land
Of late age for a child
Knows well lessons from her native land,
So an offering of cookies to her
Helped me understand a great truth missed
In the saga of my own - oh, so American development That the right to a second cookie
Is not always a matter of assumption.

:) Two Young Women Starting Well

Two young women starting well How high they will finish we can not tell Nor is this the ultimate thing That makes the hearts of many who know them swell.

It is something special for an old heart to sing Some deep bell even beyond their beauty rings It may be they touch a chord of hope In a world where to corners many it will fling.

It is not these lines where No! plays nope
It is just perhaps a glimmer of hope
That though their paths will surely greatly differ
Sometimes someone decent just seems destined for success.

:) Marriage Anniversary

The hoopla is gone
The guests went so long ago
That now we bring our child to them
And count leaving 'Leapster' as a sin
Medical bills, mortgage, two cats, dog too
More gray hairs about our crowns
More sensitivity to her frown
Still, the best and greatest decision I do not rue.

:) Mom Remembered Past Her Death's Anniversary

Four years from death plus a little I miss our frequent chats
And counsel so wise and full of gift
That death has broken the seal
Of those better conversations
And revealed wisdom that eyes
Of age could far better see than those of youth.

:) My Dad's Classic Faith

At 50 I finally see What precocious 10 could sense but not articulate The Mass - was only the ice berg's tip at sea.

Dad was an earnest lad
Son of a Gloucester gal
Sweet fish monger of deep faith
And an alcoholic father
Who wounded Dad's deep pride.

War and a Naushon Forbes Gave Dad his life long tasks He understood the savagery of life Yet left the chimes of music to a valley.

Dad would not take a drink
The Pope could not have ordered it
Nor any lesser mortal
His hope was in that Mass
Though he may well have known
But never said a word
That Father's secretary
Took care of more than paper.

Do not carelessly dismiss
This thing called faith
That spared me an alcoholic father
A harsh man who could not understand a poet son
He understood this world
I can not blame his need of hope for another.

:) Recipe For A Perfect Cup Of Coffee

Store Kona beans in freezer
Use grinder
Brew at Fahrenheit 211
Microwave technology to help control
Use Melitta's classic shape
Enjoy this poetry in a cup!

:) Russia

Candy given to comfort at take off
Spontaneous applause in landing
Our guides grand father murdered by Stalin's men
The vastness of her Western steppe experienced
If only through jet window review,
The strangeness where every car could be a cab
And duress no excuse for lack of faithfulness
To things too deep for talk.
The old ways and the new ways
Cross and merge and intertwine
Russia emerges slowly to her new age.

:) Strawberries For President

I nominate strawberries for President Although this candidate maintains a lofty silence of availibility We know this force of many a proven positive in cancer's fight A universal good that earns the nurturance gender - she, And if elected on every plate might guarantee a better world More than the many others who carry the burden of clear sex.

:) Yes, Professor Cohen!

Yes, Professor Cohen I fear that you are right
And lack even in this quiet space
The courage to stand behind you as I should,
Too few our fellows knowing who Kennan was And the inadequacy of two paltry undergraduate semesters of Her history Knowing just enough to suspect how correct you are.
Noting how even Charlie danced around you
And my impression that George Ball seemed to sort of disappear
From a far less critical area of concern after the great council.
I can only say thank you for trying to alert us
To what some would call a limiting factor
And with sadness salute you that you would try
To save us from the day when we will weep.

:) Advice To A Poet On Witness Of His Attempted Murder*

Rainer Maria Rilke gives good advice:
'... go into the depths in which your life takes rise
there you will find the answer to the question if you MUST create.'
You have received bad counsel
From the wolf pack that assembled to kill your spark.
I felt your poem's great beauty.
It took me with you to another place.
They killed you with their damned technique.
Use Rilke's dictum more than ever - Write!
The electronic book has changed it all.
Let consensus have the paper world.
Write and re-write until you know it says what you mean to say.

Critiqueing committees do not write a poem, Thank God Jefferson was a committee of one. The power of their 'inalienable' process not denied.

:) Ageing Couple

It is nice to watch them
Much as one might observe
Deer feeding undisturbed.
Just the every day significance of little things
Perhaps it is the gait that belongs to age
Or some other subtle thing
It is nice to watch
Those who go at growing old.

:) Au Contraire Mr. Kooser (2005)

Dear Poet Laureate when you quietly state:
'Poetry's purpose is to reach other people and to touch their hearts.'
You give good market guidance but
Rilke has also told us that we 'must go into the depths in
which our lives take rise to see whether we must create' a more sage
guidance it seems to me given Frost

:) Brief Conversation

'Hello poet.'
'Hello prophet.'
Three decades plus five
So long to remember so brief a conversation
With a fellow undergraduate named Chris Lazara.

:) Cats and Dog

The cats do not like it when dog intervenes For the cats know the internal regimens of their schemes, And the dog does not - and takes a feint for fight, with result It is always wise for dogs to learn cat acts before they intervene.

:) Crystal Rain

Fine rain caught by spotlight Freezes silver splinters Too heavy for the rays to hold A moment of magic that stands Against the currents of the driven day.

:) Daughter's Universe

My daughter's taught me A lot about humanity, This mortal coil that holds us all, Her small hand that touches mine A universe I never knew before.

:) Dogs And Cats Who Talk

Your cat may yet come to talk to you
Early in the morning or when at best or worst
(They sense the energy of life if things are well or ill.)
Do not let Saint Francis take you hostage
To keep you from learning how to be truly still
It is an ancient craft not easily mastered
But it is the only door if you truly want
Your cat, or even dog, to talk to you.

:) Dog's Four Biscuit Morning

The routine is this:
Off back porch return - a biscuit
Return from walk - a biscuit
Consideration for kitchen attention - 1B
Cat feeding deflection - a biscuit.

:) Formula For Better Cat Relations

Cat relations have gotten better Since learning the simple fact Of cat need for control Which guarantees what might pass for cat affection By leaving them always on their feet.

:) Galileo's Telescope

The better lens helped me to see
The moon as it may truly be
And give an insight into science ways
Procedures, formulas, mechanics and complex plays
That gave a sure clear pockmarked view
But took the old man from me.

:) House to Home

A house is not a home Though home may go to house If I should prove a louse Who loves house more than home.

:) Instruction To A Serious Student

Dear student learn from the error of one Who loved the grander scheme For by the fraction many things are gained Although the task be difficult failure here is dire Learn your fractions for they are more than math.

:) Love Poem For A Wedding - (1976 chapbook)

I love:

The tides that ebb and flow

And marbled lights on broken roads

The warmth of poetry within Evening caress that transcends sin.

I love:

The birds that were duped by an early thaw

To mid-winter song, and wonder -

If they were so very wrong?

I ask you to take this ageing ring of gold Companion touchstone of a first communion And to hold its trust as we will mold What God shall join for evermore.

:) My Friend Fear

My friend fear has been with me all my days No doubt thanks to Dad beating me at four This brutal incident taught me even in early flight To check my six to see what may be gaining on me Spared me Viet Nam just to begin the catalog That pre-dates a certain wrestling mat.

:) Of Icons That Hum, VROOM and Sometimes Shatter

The fine watch exchanged for flight time so long ago Taught me the meaning of the phrase 'fly by night' when it was stolen Even then its gold and balanced beauty of face An icon of something more than market values. Through an eBay miracle again it hums upon my wrist.

The theologian Jacques Ellul has written
That the watch is the primary symbol of modern man
I know enough of horology's history to understand
Long before Einstein it helped to conquer longitude
When latitude was safe.
Symbol or not it was no talisman this instrument of filling
'The unforgiving minute with sixty seconds worth of distance run.'

All of this is sad and somewhat tragic
Homer far more than Jesus
Filling the spirit of my days
Before dog and cat and couch would help me proclaim
A gospel only a few will understand.

It is my mother who saves me
Who in her full maturity lost a husband long before
And a tray full of ruined Hummels
With perfect peace of voice
That told no destruction to her soul of loss - said
They were only things.

My fine watch was once another Bill's
And now for a while it will be mine
It's nice to have the loan back
And although the world will kill for it
And its currency is supplanted by better tools
I know from Mom and loss a deeper truth
It is only a thing.
Which is the thing of peace and perhaps even of God
And far more worthy than seen things
Even as it hums upon my wrist.

The line in quotation marks in this poem comes from Rudyard Kipling's poem 'If'. I have always loved that phrase and apologize I did not put quotation marks around it from the very first time it was published on Poemhunter. BG

:) Poem of Pure Autobiography

Mother was Presbyterian and Dad Roman Catholic It took them a silver anniversary to truly bridge the gulf And I about as long to find my way With help from Quakers and Unitarians and other Strange creatures of the light.

Princeton all but bluntly told me that my type was not welcome And Chicago was offended at chapbook publishing that spoofed at Shelly But Berkeley welcomed me And much to Mother's dismay I said 'yes' Not knowing what yes could mean But desperate for heavier credentials.

Harvard even dimly figures in
For all my friends were going not to Harvard
But to its antitheses established in the great fight
That split New England congregationalism
And gave the word - Unitarian - to us as a term of derision.
Even Andover-Newton was not right
I tried it for three full days
Knowing by instinct's pain it was not the place.
Despite Dean Peck's powerful preaching.

Berkeley was for me correct and in its great freedom A strange thing emerged, a love to learn would come and stay Following this strange thing called truth To an old rugged cross Quite acceptable to Presbyterians but not to those Unitarians Who are too busy to stop and learn.

:) Poem of Pure Autobiography - Depression Dad

'Pop' learned, I suspect, even before the Great Depression
To fold his toilet paper with precision
Pepsi bottles were saved for the ritual return of their deposit
Beer cans were retrieved from manicuered lawns on the walk to Mass
When the cans lacked the blessing of a redemptive god called money
During that time there was very little waste amid the extravagance
Of what my young therapist referred to as the shiredom.
The waste thing has something to do
With the fact that they were a community of Puritans
Who held a vision of a very cosmopolitan Christ
Whose face was understood not in the visage
of great Rembrandt's work
But in the eyes of the youth they loved, disciplined and understood.

:) PoemHunter As A Poet's Democracy

If I have any constituency it is here
Among the many who compete for voice
A would be President who discovered quite late
He did not have the stomach for the necessary tricks
And did not care in youth how savagely uneven
The blocks are set for long distance running.
Here let me shine or preish it is ok
Sylvia Plath as wecome as you dear reader
The inner city computer educates too
Only in this space is democracy true.

:) Poetry and Coffee

Poetry and coffee These two exist All else the world's great dross.

Alone these two exist On a quiet rain swept morn Before the fever starts And daughter unbidden Embraces my neck with her small arms.

:) Poetry Of 12 Words

Cat on lap Tock of clock Wife sings Work ends Silence Night.

:) Punk Kid As Future Door Assassin

With age sometimes comes an appreciation for beauty So I feel free to grieve for my neighbor's door That was assassinated by a wanton kid with drooping drawers Who cared nothing about the beauty of cut and fashioned glass But saw the door only as impediment to unbidden entry. Shattered, I doubt our culdesac Will ever see such beauty in a door again For surely that youth's marauding was a sin.

My father had a glass door though not as fine Which closed with youthful petulance brought in kind A consequence that made me think before next time With impulse rash - and youthful - and to be completely truthful I see Dad's sterness as necessity now And understand why that hard closing almost made him have a cow.

:) Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Morals

The insight from the old school house
Was greater than its simple room
Before the time men walked on the moon
And assorted means and mechanisms
Continued to assert their powers of true Gods
Which would claim our greater centers.
The fact that morality was taught against a backdrop
Where sin was regarded as much more real
And a force of our nature worthy of contention.

:) Six Of Twelve Reasons Not To Execute Moussaoui

- 1. He wants death.
- 2. He wants death.
- 3. He wants death.
- 4. He wants death.
- 5. He wants death.6. He wants death.

:) Something Of A Truth That Is Above

The calculus is much more than we see And you beloved Uncle beyond my mother's blood Taught me in last days upon the planet Something of a truth that is above

You can have a small empire Or a great one At the end, the end is end.

:) The Age Of Innocence (**)

With four simple words
The age of innocence has gone
And taken with it daughter's bath
'Papa, the shower's faster! '

:) Travel To Russia

If to Russia you have great need to go There is much more buried there than snow And Hitler and Napoleon both will tell Casual preperation is a formula for woe If in Russia you truly want success to show Do not casually to Mother Russia go.

:) Two Rings

He gave her a ring shown on black velvet
She wore it daily till her death
She gave him a locket ring
With scrolled letters and hint of heavy gold
He wisely knew its danger and left its wear to son
So this marriage through their years
That went of two score minus three
One with ring and one with out
This was a marriage that grew more true with time.

One last word, young lovers of our different age, You would do well to ponder the enigma of a world Where rings could count both for so little and so much A world in which there was no magic in gold.

+ Street Kids

Sometimes, alone in the chapel - a silence that rings And an opportunity to remember them.

More than their weapons, once feared, More than their ability to transform the common into instruments of self-destruction, More than those too wounded or too impoverished of vision to give the drought of care and discipline their need bespoke, More than all these, I remember their stories.

Marcus, up late one night, truant from bed, telling his legacy of eight short years caring for a drunken, passed out father, his terror infinite six light years later.

Tony, who took the robbery rap.

Paul, the greatest triumph of a love attempted and impossible three years of street survival,

He knew the wonders of a dipsy dumpsteer that keeps the rain off and might even provide a meal.

Jonathan threatened to jump from 11 stories,

But in truth only wanted the attention of half the county.

Antics - with fear behind - make a smile.
Still there is a certain grief that mingles with strange rage
That life should be so harsh on those who Christ embraced.
I would not idealize them - no, not even here for you, not even for them.
The experience taught too much of sin and deeper passions.

Jesus did not count the cost.

Do we dare to share with Him the fearful questions and follow where they may lead?

To pray always, listen without ceasing, and in everything hope this being the will of God in Christ Jesus.

911 Memoriam

The sky in Texas mourns this day
A million places join her
First thought it was a movie
Then realization it was the news
Then fear for civil liberty and relapse into television addiction
.....The face of the young fireman caught going up
......By one of the survivors coming down
At another massacre in another time in another place
General Bradock's dieing words come home:
'Who ever would have thought it?'
THEY did.
My month of shock their joy.

A Box For Bolts Of Line And Soul

The little yellow box that once held the atropine injectors To pull myself or comarade back from horrid combat death Now holds the bolts for line and soul With which I write to wage a very different sort of war.

A Candidate For Ending the Final Chapbook When It Comes

At the very end No more words to send Trophies count no more The goal is not to score For new poems shall be no more.

A Corgy In Control Of Everything

Our dog barks in fierce alarm
Proceeds to down stairs investigation
Of the familiar sound from the water closet.
Like his master he must be in control of everything
Like his master - ultimately - he is in control of nothing
Except the timbre of a pseudo bark.

A Country Christmas Eve (1976 chapbook)

On a solitary vigil so cold and fair The air took feeling from my face And gave a glowing in its place, I saw snow glistening upon the fields And heard the ringing silence of the night.

Not a breath of wind stirred the snow to dance As a renegade star put the moon to shame A distant silver fire that lit the blue night sky.

A Doctor's Advice

Our lives are driven things
But not driven well
When we neglect the vehicle's maintenance
A simple reality
Neither we nor life is 1 plus 2 plus 3
It takes a life time for us to know
And even more for this truth to show
But a second chance at maintenance is not given.

A Killer of Poets

My instinct is to avoid them:
The English teacher who shrugs
When the sixteen year old is not Frost or Dickinson
Who can not see the beauty of either the effort or the interest,
The critic who has never penned a line
Other than that of criticism,
The editor who can find nothing good to say of a failed piece,
The parent who will say:
'You will never make any money with that stuff' - though probably true Fails to understand poetry is the thing that helps see us through
A land that is a killer of poets.

A March Not Made on MLK Day

MLK was at BU when 'Jack' Taylor was there He had no contact with him Though both were theologs. When I asked my sophmoric question MLK was already a name.

I have come to admire King more and more Wonder if someday he will live with Gandhi and Jesus In my pantheon of heroes.

No, it is not King But the wave of a 100,000 folk Washing down a street That draws me.

A good group of folk for sure This is a great part of the lure Rabble can not use these great numbers To mask their mischief.

Yes, I will honor the great chieftain
When Andrew Young is an even more distant memory
From a remarkable evening of learning
But today I will let my body heal
And celebrate for a moment that flesh that held his soul
That a nation might heal and be made more whole.

A Mother's Confession Appropriate to Her Day

The woman who most in our church would vote a saint Shared that if she had known at birth The pain that that young infant would bring The destruction of inheritance, lawyers, counselors, judges and debt She would have drowned him long before Drugs carried him to their universe.

But she did not know and her son Now liberated from the talons of this evil Will, if you wish to take my bet, Bless her with a: 'Happy Mother's day! ' A few days forward from these lines.

A Mother's Day Approbrium

The woman who most in our church would vote a saint
Shared that if she had known at birth
The pain that that young infant would bring
The destruction of inheritance, lawyers, counselors, judges and debt
She would have drowned him long before
Drugs carried him to their universe.
But, she did not know and her son Now liberated from the talons of this evil
Will, if you wish to take my bet,
Bless her with a: 'Happy Mother's day! '
A few days forward from these lines.

A Much Belated Salute to the Gardner as Evangelist

In the redemption of my life
The sensate played first violin
The presence of a beauty unspoken, unheard
The color of flowers with eternal call - silent
That played across the adult years of gray
With its splotches of black and turquoise and gold
Until the bankrupt soul,
Like a chick pecking out of its shell
Breaks forth into light
An intimation of life and death and light
Unnamed beyond our present darkness.

A Poet's First Prose Paragraph on Noetic Theology

WHAT IS NOETIC THEOLOGY AND WHY COULD THIS BE AN IMPORTANT QUESTION?

It is through the influence of Victor Frankl that the word 'noetic' has come to me. If Robert C. Leslie's interpretation is correct Frankl understands noetic to mean that which is spiritual but not religiously based. To many, perhaps of orthodox faith, this must appear to be an oxymoron but let me continue. I worked as a chaplain's assistant for my work.stduy job at a large teaching hospital during my seminary years. On a rare Suday off I attended a worship service at a nearby Fellowship of the Unitarian Universalist Association. It was a jazz concert being given as a memorial service for the daughter - who had died - of the musician who was playing. The sense of grief that poured out of the end of that father's saxaphone for his dead daughter is a vivid memory thirty five years later. There was no talk of Jesus or resurrection, and for that matter there was relatively little talk, but it was an unmistakeably spiritual experience that has stuck with me. I am convinced that there is a noetic spirituality that functions in the world for better or for worse.

A Post William Cullen Bryant Thanatopsis

The throng that came filled the church
The box can only hold a body
A diamond, a life - the box is not the end
It can not hold a soul
Nor the numbers in our church so bold
To declare by their presence that death is not the end.

There is that which lives beyond the frame It is our spirits that roam the earth for good or ill It matters not that we are still For we always live in others.

A Presence Here

More lines of weight Less frequent the presence here. A celebration of life More to this than strife To write is breath itself For those of poet soul.

A Prose Piece as Poetry Eulogizing Dwight Eisenhower

'The death of President Eisenhower takes from our midst a great Ameican, a great statesman and military leader who served our country in peace and war with sound judgment and outstanding courage.' Speaker of the House John McCormack

In Washington tonight the heart of Dwight David Eisenhower is still. He passed gently from us at 12: 25 this afternoon. President, General of the Army, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Supreme Commander of N.A.T.O., author, and former President of Columbia University; all prove an inadequate measure of the man. For Dwight Eisenhower was the embodiment of an American dream.

Only history can judge the ultimate significance of the 'Eisenhower Years'. It will have much to assess; implementation of containment, the peaceful uses of atomic energy, establishment of coexistence, the first enforcements pertaining to civil rights, the ending of the Korean conflict, and the espousal of the Eisenhower Doctrine, but perhaps most the fact that he moderated the fury of our our domestic politics. Only time can validate whatever judgment we hold.

Official Washington, as well as the world, has paid profuse tribute to this great American. Richard Nixon spoke of his 'unique place in American history'. Lyndon Johnson declared him 'A giant of our age'. Truman praised his military acumen, and Hubert Humphrey his international foresight. Ted Kennedy cited his 'quiet dignity' and Earl Warren stated that he felt an illustrious chapter in world history had closed. Everett Dirksen, the Republican Senate Minority Leader, had the most definitive comment: 'The World Liked Ike.'

Yet the significanc of Dwight David Eisenhower lies not in the world of Washington's movers and shakers. It lies in the genuine and sincere affection with which he was held by his fellow citizens. Of all the beautiful tributes paid to this former President the greatest was given by an anonymous negro woman who, when asked, stopped before the local television cameras and said: 'I think he was a nice man. I'm sorry he died, and I hope he goes to heaven.' Dwight Eisenhower's spirit lives in the hearts of those who knew him. There was no facade. His intense humanity has not been lost upon us.

A Tale of and Advice to Two Teen Lovers

He was black. She was white. Her daddy did not like the sight Of two teens sharing sex Who thought they were in love. He turned eighteen and went before The lass at sixteen stayed behind.

Now the father had this in mind He knew the lad had crossed the line He called it rape and may have designed The evil that took six years of prison From the young black's life and Passed him into a world of strife Placing the brand of 'sex offender' Upon all his future days.

This tale is true, I rue, I rue. So my young friends remrember and beware and If for your mate you truly care Remember the dangers of being young lovers That should you move too fast You can inadvertentenly break the happiness Of your tandem powers.

A Tale of War and Courage Beyond

Senator Inouye tells a story of fighting in French hedge rows. The German wanted to surrender and at a critical moment Neither of them having language and the German Wanting to show pictures of those he loved Quickly reached within his side pocket Where a weapon could have been concealed. Young Inouve hit him in the face with his rifle butt and said half century later with out malice, 'This is war.' I do not do this Ken Burns capture justice. You must see 'The War' to truly understand my passion. Daniel Inouye and Morris were the only two of one hundred Not to vote for Viet Nam's escalation trigger. A not so little thing called: The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. Which brings us to the bottom line of this poem That there is very little I can nicely give you If you want to experience something Of an extremely harsh thing called war.

A Truth Canonized by Disney

'If Momma isn't happy, no one's happy.'
Is a truth canonized by Disney
That us macho premarriage males seem to learn
Is very true but only after the knot has been tied.

Adirondack Autumn (Snippets Of His Glory While I Wait 1996 Chapbook)

The mountain flames
In fire brush orange and tincture's gold,
Green malt the hills with pastel flecks
Where slate white birches
Column cathedrals of another order,
Whose luminescent leaves reveal
God's power as a simple thing.
Sunlight on a leaf that dwarfs the beauty
Of Europe's finest glass and foretells in barren form
An endless summer.

Adirondack Hot and Cold

Basic things like fire and cold Call us from our daily mold To discover realms we do not know And despite not knowing Need not to fear.

Advice for a Questing Poet - Consider the Fishing Vest

Consider the fishing vest for you will need to be mobile You never know when inspiration will strike Your pen your paper even a dictionary may be too much To be cased. The vest seems to me Perhaps the only formula for expediency.

P.S. I have had very good luck with mine ordered from L. L. Bean of Freeport, Maine if you need a source.

Advice for Deploying Military

For the complexity of that world where Wal Mart does not live Two items can be precious A sleep mask to help with rest where there is little An SAS Headover to help with pesky drafts And a 1,000 other miseries you can not control. If sixteen ounces is too much weight Take the Headover for its veratility.

Advice For Executives (2005)

In your moments of reflection meditate On the vast difference between Ground level and floor level.

Advice To Young Passions (2005)

- Don't allow them to govern. Educate with Franklin's autobiography Read, read, read! Eschew TV.
- 1. 2. 3, 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.
- Seek to stand in the quiet presence of those greater than yourself.
- Reflect
- Pray
- 9. Fellowship 10. Trust something greater than your own ego (God?) .

Advice to Young Theologs in Training

When no one is looking
Slip off to the malls
There you will find true faith,
But not a people - that being blessed - are happy.
Even at the ice cream shop
With perfect evening sunlight
I can not help but see this in those who pass
Most are not happy.
They believe in a faith
You are not studying in seminary.
It does not grant them peace
Only the imperative of having more and more
Of things that do not work for peace.

After Mary Ranney's Service

The night after the funeral I am still not free Haunted in part by her memory The realization of early death Only yesterday it seems A partner at the pre-service table. Yet from the closure of candle, bread and wine Words from her 'bunco' circle friend ring: 'Mary, it was not your time! '

After The Book Fair

The school's book fair storm
Has come but not yet quite gone
A clever piece of marketing
It probably is not wrong
In helping undergird the spirit
That makes capitalism strong.

Yet for it physical location
The library seems strange
Libraries being the basis of so much insight
Into even things in a democracy that are not right.
They - libraries - are sacred to me
A great help in surviving
Years of so much reading
And so little money.

We must keep the world's book fairs
For books are good,
Sometimes they lead us to my particular should That it is not another possession on the shelf
That leads to our greatest good But the costly freedom that is inside covers
Granting us the wisdom to not have to buy and buy.
There can be a peace and center from materialism's menace
That ism as so many others failing to understand the human core
Raising to apostacy the Newtonian score.

Money is grand and book fairs fare Great freedom and joy are inside those covers Me thinks despite the societal apostacy It is reading even more than money that makes us free Helps us see the way that things should be Both for ourselves and others.

All Of These Things - 2005

All of these things
That come and go
Are handled best by hope
Through storm and stillness
That somehow the better spirit leads
And from this though we can not know
There is deposit for good.

An After Christmas K-Mart

Deserted, isles almost empty
The great energy gone
The orgasm has been expended
The virgin is sacrificed
Only the blood from the altar
In patch work stains
Can be seen.

An Alphabet To Make It Go

The people who dot the I give us: i The people who crosss the T give us: t It takes us all to make it go Even a visionary or so.

An April 2007 Memoriam

40,00 lights proclaim against the night When given driven focus The tenderness of human souls That speaks the sadness of our land.

An Easter Evening Hug

The hug from daughter Unbidden, unceremonial, undemanded, unexpected A small thing in her universe An act of grace received in mine A gift befitting His highest Holy Day The manifestation through an Easter evening hug Of a far more sacrifical and compounding love That leaves the Easter bunny's eggs in dust.

Anger's Barrel

As one raised rural
Guns were not necessarily a big deal
City boys have more entertainment options.
It is the field that sings the siren's song
Of hunt and death.
It is when anger is juxtaposed over a barrel
That this is not cool.

Animals

The flower shop lady told us the story Of her shop cat returning With a kitten in her mouth That became shop cat number three That we adopted When her little piece of capitalism Came to an end.

Her story helps me to remember
That we are all animals
It is not just the polished elites who would be exempt
I too love to be stroked
Have nestled in more than one bed.

Apology to Ancestors

You come to see with time
That you may have done it your way
But you did not do it all alone,
Nor are you as capable as you
Thought you were in youth.

You see Aunt Ruthie's old coffee table from forever And discover for the first time That it is made of solid cherry, knowing -With a proper dash of workmanship It can be transformed from frump to quiet elegance.

I write of more than a piece of furniture.

Ariel Passing

The blue eyes known so long but seldom seen Are dimmed before their time by gray hair's aura. As a chasm looms before us That even full years fail to anticipate The true burden is my sister's faithfulness I play at grief she knows too well.

But better this twilight for me That tells of night approaching Than a life switched off of light With God like savagery tearing the most inward parts.

Death surely coming to claim As coffee is sipped in Hope's Way Black words struck to white paper And snow in chiffon cascades Rise off Cricket's rainbow Lake.

Assumption As Miracle

To me it is a small miracle That something as quiet As the casting of a ballot Can prove more powerful Than the discharge of a gun.

Aunt Esther's Guest Room Mantel Words

In youth I burned them into memory, With age their wisdom comes more clear And so I celebrate something of the spirit of her guest room here.

'In men whom men condemn as ill I find so much of goodness still. In men whom men pronounce divine I find so much of sin and blot I hesitate to draw the line where God has not.'

Unascribed poem on a very old lithograph

Autumn Leaves

The leaves in golds of brown and yellow Declare a beauty greater than the daily green Beauty always present but not always seen That in that time before their fall Declare a hope for us all Of a God who publishes a thousand tongues That this may work towards all being won.

Awake My Friends Awake!

Awake my friends awake The long night's passing New day will grant its blessing Awake my friends awake!

Basic Brokeness

Perhaps it was last night's rain throwing storm
Or the oppulence of the day's wedding
Or the failure to take necessary medications
Or reflection on the sufferings of the lives in our small church
Or just my own failings come home to haunt me
But it seems there is a basic brokeness
Beyond the problems of Presidents
Living in Presidential magisterium
That even a poet can be afraid to name.

Basic Humanity

After presenting pens to the garbage men and thanking them for what they do I returned to bed and wife And thought those fellows on that big truck are what I believe in Basic Humanity - perhaps saints - but probably No greater sinner than myself Writing poetry in bed with a nice pen after getting the garbage out.

Beauty Quest

Although these lines are not as fair
As so many forms that claim the greater view
Not even considering the majestic things of nature's way
Whose dominion we may yet come to rue
Still in this offering there is hope of beauty too
If spirit's sweetness can perchance ever be conveyed
By something as frail as a line of soul.

Beer And The Bishop

When the bishop came to talk at lunch time The boys chose a second beer As being their greater good Though his words were great And could have given real hope In the nastiness of their situation, The boys did not hear for they chose beer, And I received a little hint Of how Jesus must have felt When the crowd chose Barabbas.

Before The Morning - A Prayer To The Father Of Jesus

Author of all, fire in the burning bush - unconsumed Grant by some grace to ask the question: What would you have me do today? And to answer it in faith and action By strength beyond my own strained life Though stained I can yet praise you through Christ.

Benediction

May this evening grant you
The blessings of a new friend
May this evening grant you
Good times with an old friend.
And may this evening grant you
An intimation of an eternal friend;
Who will see you safely
To your home and loved ones.
And - if all this waits,
May the evening yet hold
A secret blessing for you.

Benediction To A Core Values Class Of Military Basics (1994)

If the abiding issue is both war and peace
And I love you as my children
Having given nothing of this frame to last
My gift to you must be stronger than death,
More desirable than chocolate,
More lasting than the kiss or bite of history's moment.

So in benediction
May you know a peace
Greater than success
More powerful than happiness
Enduring as life itself
That ever in wholeness your spirit may dwell upon this earth
And jump the life to come.

Best Things In The House

Wife, daughter, books
Dog,2 cats,1 rat,3 fish
Computer with internet to give the world these words
Poemhunter to publish for free
Pen light to write at night
Dog to guard the door
Best Things In The House.

Black And Decker (TM) Ambush

The toaster oven turned house assassin
The switch was off - orange bright light was on
And feeling the unexpected heat
As 'Doubting Thomas' worked the switch
Unbelieving of observation.

Our sweet toaster had turned assassin And though having missed by some greater grace As assassins are wont to do The house would have been the object of its fire.

Justice was summary and swift Betraying house god to the trash was a fast throw But despite the execution fear has lingered Where ever did its malignant spirit go?

Bolshoi Moscow (2005)

I never knew how much movement could communicate Was struck by Giselle more than lovers holding hands And retrospectively have a penitential prayer of gratitude, That we didn't blow each other up Though we came extremely close As two honest Secretarys have informed us.

Bragging Rights

We would do well in shopping To remember there is a cost that attends bragging rights Sometimes those superior savings Can be tremendously expensive.

Brent Sherman

Where are you? How are you doing?

Bright Morning Light

With morning's sun I know night's work is done And celebrate my fragile life upon this sphere Hopeing that it's not all here.

POEM'S SCRIPTURAL INFLUENCE ISAIAH 45: 7 'I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.' KJV

Broken Glass In Close Proximity Driveway

Unless properly cleansed This even handed justice Commends this bottle's shards To our own feet.

With an acknowledgement of William Shakespeare's blatant influence.

Broken Ice Maker

God grants to us a running refrig
It is the ice maker that is broken
Cost of repair too much.
My Puritan genes recoil
Wife and daghter do not understand
Why Dad does take a stand
Our own ice we will make.
In old time trays cust to fit
Our cubes produced in an appropriate niche.
Life made a little less mechanical
To slow us down and help remember
It is not just ice machines that end.

BTK's High Has Come (7)

BTK's high has come And without assistance from a hangman's noose, A quiet devil among us he proves The power of addiction to notoriety This yeast that blew the beast beyond proportion.

He might have choosen the brighter angel's path That leads to media annonymity If just one or two had dared to trespass Against his forced march to hell.

EXPLICATION:

(Prompted by the national news in the United States of a serial killer's ten consecutive life sentence. BTK stands for bind, torture, kill by which he promoted himself to the media.)

Burying Loved Dog

In days of old
Burying the loved dog
The swing of the pick when necessary
To break the difficult ground
Each spade of earth that told of love
A grave deep enough the earth would cover death's scent
Protect from critter marauders
Grief in its necessary love
Began with the healing of the unspeakable earth.

Can't Sleep?

Can't sleep? Here is a prescription without narcotic. Try meditating on a lit candle in the dark.

CAP Colonel

The colonels are the captives of the generals
And generals of presidents
And presidents of nations Not even the top dog is truly free These are only the things that we can see
And so much more transpires beneath the surface
That we can only truly know with time and history.
In the interval we must hope that
There is more than the passion of the moment
Some place of calm unknown
That beckons through the call of eons against all odds.

Carlyn's Poem (1976 chapbook) (density ****)

'Seven Golden Daffodils' came to me And peace to try at poetry 'Seven Golden Daffodils' touched my days A life reshaping in new ways.

Orange sun and frosted mount Emerald isles in silver laced seas White sloop from fable named Halcyone.

Wine that caught the fire's glow Enchanting melodies from silver strings Golden flames - cracked sparks to fling.

Faces that returned a smile Friendship warming as a child Flying feet on oaken floors All of this and even more.

Carry Permit (density ****)

The cat has kept her claws
The dog's always been a bud
(But there have been exceptions)
If domestic violence is down
Is it because the cat has kept her claws?

Cat Bowl Mystique

I do not understand
The cat bowl mystique competition
While looking both the same to me
Are not the same to the cats
Who battle on occassion for what they regard
As the better bowl, both being equally filled.
I wonder in this drama
If the agenda may not be the bowl.

Cat Casualty (density **)

We called them Sprite and Squirt
Appropriate consumeables
And never in our wildest imaginings
Thought the owls would take one from us.
And so we grieved each in our own way as we passed
The marks that magnified the certainty of loss.
My wife with her peculiar force of personality
And I with pen and talk with her and others.
Still past the third day I could not help but
Look for Sprite in hope of resurrection
While watching number two against the dog in grief.

The night before - we talked at last, at length And settled on a simple fact
That Sprite had need for freedom
More than security of house,
It was freedom that defined her - gave power to her days.

The ache within us lessened Not all are built to live within the safety of an arch While heart needs time to heal the head at least can know Sometimes freedom's dark dangers win, It may not be what seems the sin When you have to let one go.

Cat Encounter

Our stray cat who blodied my nose Plays by rules but ones almost no one knows While this kitty did not mean to be a felon Drawing blood is not so nice So I've become more careful to try and insure This event will not happen twice.

Cat Poem #3

Berkeley California is a long way from Freeville New York. Boston not so far, my father made that trip. For me a longer journey. Dad never knew that he was poor.

'Invictus' is not correct. That poet knew John Wayne before the cinema had its power to hlep inform our vision.

The cat comes and asks for time I stroke her back, encourage her claws from flesh, listen to her motor - Wish there had not been so many years with out her Fulfill the mandate of these lines.

Cat Strokes

It is a good thing to stroke the cat For you will never know what you get back Perhaps a hiss or movement close It is a good thing to stroke the cat.

Caution To Morning's Fast Risers

A word with you jack rabbitt riser
There have been some studies on extended longevity
It seems there is a pattern to those who break 100
They do not erupt from tender sleep's deep grasp
But slowly gather self from morning's haze
Perhaps not fearing quite so much a world
Over busy and becoming more so,
With God's present exile for many,
If you will forgive a conjecture
From this pen basically concerned for the world's fast risers.

Cavalcade Of Four Line Musings

Precious metal band about my finger - gold By it a classic story that is told How much more honest as the marriage did unfold If the ring were worn through my nose.

Cavalcade Of Two Line Musings

If we are only money and power Then what are we?

Celebrating the Late Life Church Years of Louise Burnam Jones - a Post Death Fairwell

I do not know why I loved her, Perhaps some rare transmutation of eros From my sixty years of frame to her eighty plus. Perhaps that she truly needed that handicap spot at the front of the church so clearly, I never begrudged it to her even once. Perhaps because she was a pillar of the place That called the present pastor that I love. Perhaps because on occasion she moved with so much obvious pain, yet I never heard her complain, even once. Could it be because she was a teacher of so many years a trade I truly trust? Or that she taught at home and church quietly gave so much good? With us and then gone A fast sinking ship No time to say: 'So long! ' I grieve her timely passage and know it is my own. No time to say: 'So long! 'I guess I'll say it here And hold the tear.

Celebration of a Child (2005) (density ****)

Ladies and Gentlemen: It gives me great pleasure
To present to you: Elena Ivanova Krivolapova
Who has been with us quite a while
And rather inappropriately ignored
But she is living proof that love has more power than nations
And a child is a center
Worthy of our attentions.

Chaos Comes

Chaos comes it does not ask permission On little cat's feet Or the jack boot herd Blessed by the powerful Consumed by the ignorant 'Make the world safe for democracy.' 'I am not a crook! 'I do.' I do.' Beware of dog MADE IN CHINA October 24,1929 Chaos comes.

Chapters

One chapter closes and another begins Sometimes it can not help but feel as sin Sometimes the relief is so great -The chapter so heavy It can only with comrades be opened again.

Charles Schulz

I listen to savants on Charlie Rose
Discussing complexities of North Korea
After a somewhat failed missile launch and think
How fortunate for the world that Charles Schulz failed
To work for Disney his pen having given us Linus et. al.
Where Linus boldly proclaims on the glass from which I drink:
'The quest for security is no picnic!'

Charlie Rose At The Movies

When Charlie tries to hustle movies He is at his worst despite honorable effort Like this poet trying to sell insurance It worked and works but only barely.

Charlie Rose For Lent

I have given up Charlie Rose for Lent The sparkling cognoscenti of the world It is my terrible atonement For all my sins of knowing When I have known so little While suspecting even less Of sin's great power to rule.

Charlie Rose Has a Chuckle

Being almost television addiction free
Even the Conventions I limited
To the speeches of Obama and McCain
There is the exception of the Charlie Rose show
Which steers much more than the movies I elect not to see.
It is the style of television that I hope will keep us free.
If vigilance for our freedom will yet be
It is the thing that makes us worthy of its keeping.

Cheerios For Breakfast - (density *****)

Ladieeeeees and Gentlemen! I present to you on the center Red Horse stage The meaning of life -'Cheerios for breakfast!'

Child's Surprise

Mother would approve this use of wealth This bringing of child to distant land And claiming as one's own, If through a different process. I think she would approve even to The very bed in which she sleeps Was once her own and now furthers life So near day break's horizon crest I can not with hold a gasp of wonder In receipt of blessing Of this surprise.

Choice

It is not that I do not love poetry It is there are times when I love the poetry of movement more.

Christ - Modernity and a Free Cup of Water

There is an accounting for even a glass of water in the great business. There is no charge.

Soda costs and water is free.
The great business understands that the cup of water is not truly free.
Free water belongs to a Christ we do not easily see and
Has a theologians understanding of the deeper reality. Why must it be so difficult for us ordinary folk to more deeply see As the theologians and a great business that is on every corner.

Christ's Clown (Snippets)

Make certain of this dear reader If spirit breathes through these lines It is not the fool that holds this pen That grants these marks their power.

Church Vote

YES - 50, NO - 3 The way of congregational polity May not be the way to eternity Even should the majority Be proven to have acted correctly If three are not divinity I wonder at our theology.

City Election

With two friends running for election I see the pain with unusual clarity The disappointment in learning That great endorsements are purchased At a cost of honor, and populist philosophy Counts little in the whirl Of the great mosaic of special interests.

My deeper debt has earned his spurs Took on an incumbent so well fortified He only had to breathe to win And understands the power In humble house to house solicitation.

Perhaps in all this drama
The sadness is I have only one lawn
With which to display proclivity
And secrecy does not shield from decision's pain
When two men seek an office same.

I can only hope idealism's champion Will stay his course and take the drubbing Master the bitter lessons of vision's call And like my likely winning friend learn That he too can fight another day.

City's Evening Sidewalk

Against the traffic's constant hiss of the artery around her The suns casts buildings into mellow shades of their evening hues Wife and daughter search for thrift store treasures and Another approach in a tongue not my own.

I am impressed by the beauty of the younger's face, her breasts, the confident manner with which she moves and The intensity of the mother's words, her worried demeanor, her gaunt red eyes - Only their walk is cadenced - Everything else speaks of two planets Held in their orbits by a gravity I can not see.

Clinton's Legacy

Bill,

Although rather liking you, And having heard the rumor of your great charm, That when this thing about legacy is sifted through One of the nuggets I suspect you left us was George W.

Coffee and Candle Light

Coffee and candle light is how I start each day Seeing the girls off to school A little prayer of safety For the treachery on busy roads. But before the time of prayer Before Rembrandt's great icon* Before the planner starts to rule the day Before Bob Kimball's poetry Or even scripture's great gifts There is coffee and candle light And almost always it is good.

Coffee as Morning Drug

It is caffeine for sure
But even more the ritual
Which with brain baked
From sleep that does not rest
Gives power to my primary drug Achievement, a thing modest and fulfilling
As a decent cup of coffee
Which keeps me from those other drugs
That guard the gates of a hell
Where all are wlecomed in.

Colors Of Darkness

I come with pen Lord
As some saint of old would pray
Hear dog and furnace
In the bastion of the night
How can I justify the air I breathe?
On a planet lost to seeth
In so many colors of darkness?

Compassion In A City Called Corpus Christi

Much to my shame I have lost his name
That good dentist so long ago
In the land of Corpus Christi
Who fixed my teeth for free
And did it with such elegance and skill
He not only allowed me to keep my dignity
But proved to this poor pastor then
That men of mammon are not all men of sin
And that not all ministering to the human race
Carry the big REV. before their name's most forward place.

Complaint

My daughter says: 'I'm cold.' She does not know the privilege Of her South Texas July complaint.

Confession

This is where I preach
As God will give me vision to want to say a thing or two
And not just about that splendid fellow who was a Jew
So Helmut Thielike may have spoken truth:
'The poets have become the pastors of our time.'
Or a pastor has a need to try to play at poet.

Constantine

Something extraordinary happened A peasant preacher's influence Would reach in about three hundred years and odd A future Roman emperor Who would in symbol of crossed sticks Conquer and go on to rule The issue not being the tactical segacity of Constantine But his sensitivity to what had developed Under the surface of his times.

Contemporary Retrospect On Sex

Sex has always created controversy Look at King David - Mercy! Mercy! Far more than bring us children It riles the body politic Especially in matters of presidential or public education. But Madison Avenue is no fool It uses sex subliminal or direct as a tool To help us worship with money offerings To many a commercial ghoul. It's enough to make a fellow think and think again, There's more to this sex stuff than simply sin! So some might hope it will go away But I'll make a bet that it will stay And for myself rather than looking for a fray Acknowledge its great enduring porwer For evil or good or even play.

Conversion

It occurred to me while loading pills How much life had changed from days of youth When loading would have meant a magazine With which to harry crow or fox.

One spring break was memorable Twenty three wood chucks were taken with varying forms of guile I can not even imagine such carnage being recreation now For one who delights in close proximity of deer.

Too much of anger, fear and youth has passed With a vision of place upon a different planet Than when hope was standing in the center of the whirl. The innocence too is gone, When the word 'survival' was something only for artic explorers And others too fool hardy to imagine.

Cop Breakfast

The police eat breakfast Like everyone else A call comes - they go The waitress brings me a coffee With water intended for two.

Corgy Theology

My dog can not protect me From that which has dominion Over him and history.

And even ink that can triumph over time Spares us little when we are done Is frail to inspiration's moment A pale and inadquate thing.

Else the struggle to live the Gospel would not be An order of such magnitude and easily done.

So let us celebrate fish for breakfast Keep God ever in the center of our pain and joy And like Bergmann's Seventh Seal Squire - Protest! While smiling nicely back at death.

Corrected Counsel To A Canine From A Superior Being

A MANSION IN HEAVEN

Your Highness:

Noteing how you treat the cats In depth of night from day And noteing the vast difference in treatment I must address these words to your attention.

First, we must discuss your over vigilance, That has nothing to do with security And everything to do with extorting more than The established one milk bone limit The cats do not appreciate this phony zeal Nor do I now that I am wise.

Second, you refuse to share Your upstairs observation ledge with the cats. In grim display of power Worthy of Hitler and Stalin's spirit.

I am not pleased - and remember the Red Sea - There could be consequences.

Signed,

God

Dad's Boom Box

Dad's boom box was a carillon
That filled His valley with sweet strains
Built of back yard melted metal scraps
Time and market savy
It was in part the harbinger of reason
That at his death his mourning staff insisted
On 'the good shepherd' being the motif to set in glass
Despite his lack of ordination by or for a flock.

Daily Writing

A little bit each day In hope that it will stay As much as for the play A vision towards beauty's way.

Daughter Art

It comes as some surprise
At having the opportunity and missing the Peggy Gugenheim
And carry the regreat a decade plus
That a patch of curled ribbons
Not meriting an amateur's second glance
Could be a source of such delight
And these paraded - not even presented!

Daughter's Evening Before Tests

Testing evening is the night before the tests When daughter goes to bed before the early hour And I relect on old percentile scores That couldn't be maintained through out my space Even before learning of the foolishness that made my day's a race.

Daughter's One Morning Litany

Would you like an egg?
No thank you.
Would you like some orange juice?
No thank you.
Would you like some milk?
No thank you.
Would you like a hot chocolate?
No thank you.
Would you like some toast?
Yes, please.

David Halberstam's Bond

The man I criticized in Harper's is dead And a little piece of me is with him gone. He the Pulitzer winner and I never out of bush league, This plus more than years our seperation, Our bond our love of word on page. Things that time has told that lead to deeper truth.

Death In Distant Family

Wendy was beautfiul and disturbed A beauty the photographs could only barely capture Wife's sister barlely known is dead. It is not her release from pain that unsettles me, Nor the savage swiftness of her transition's last developments, It is the simple realizations:

That something in me loved her Loved the fantasy like you love a movie star Or a magazine model - Or a woman so striking only a mogul could own her - So rare the physical perfection;

The young son left behind enhancing an in the bone realization,

That Death does not negotiate and can not be reversed; Demanding the writing of late night scribbles To restore some semblance of capacity for sleep.

Death Of Big Blue

Big Blue has died an old fish death
Daughter also informed of his passing
Perhaps the trauma of an out of tank jump,
Perhaps the escaping memory of the years we had him,
Even the tough Beta's life is short,
Although this one we will remember for his beauty.

Debt To A Once Stranger (Dale Ivy) While Traveling

Mindless, the trip's early morning departure.
The critical gear of cell phone left behind
No where as serious as the Gatling guns Custer left behind
God's opportunity to further learn
From the great lessons of grace that await.

Decent Men

There is a decency in the world It does not stop death But if memory is preserved it is stronger than death.

Karl was a grave digger and the foreman Of a crew right out of 'Mice and Men.' I remember his call as a teen, When chill had taken me From opening the sweet earth With too little understanding.

Small thing a toll call from Groton to Dryden Long before the word cellular was ever heard A small thing but decent for Karl was truly poor. He did not have money for toll calls, But Karl was a decent man.

Dave Carter is a decent man.
He gave a kidney to a friend to live.
My mission must be prayer
That God will see him safely through and home again,
If all goes well they will see each other every day at work.
Only Greek is strong enough to hold an act called 'agape.'
For Dave Carter is a decent man.

Ron Fogleman is a decent man famous to a few. Helpful to men he never knew in face but understood in form. I have a hunch about all those combat missions in Nam. A decent man, they were not flown for gain or glory. Ron Fogleman is a decent man.

I wonder when God judges me If he will hold his standard against the likes of these? I pray he won't for words can not compete with deeds For these are decent men but of far greater sum.

Deep in the Bowels

Deep in the bowels live those of great influence Lindsay would dance upon the surface of New York For all the world to watch as he walked Harlem's streets Gave the unions all they wanted and almost Birthed a bankrupt city in the process of Small trade offs in the quest to be a President. It was the school tearcher's pension fund ultimately That saved The City.

Deep Throat - 7

Even the title offends for those of long memory And it is strange the Ivory gal would forfeit Her crown to make bad film.

The current scene where money boldly takes The center stage is no less obscene Than other things that should be left as private.

Discovering Routine

As I am not proscribed by success or form
This poem has a dedication to Kerry Klingensmith
Or what ever her name may currently be
(After al, I it is the person not the name we love and remember.)
Who was gracious enough to listen as an audience of one
To my first lecture on organizational process
In which much to her surprise
I extolled the virtues of routine as power.

Disneyland At Half Past Youth

These molten words will change but Disneyland will always be divine This Kingdom Khrushchev could not enter A great magnet for older wallets and youthful minds And entertainment some find sublime.

500,000,000 is quite a throng So nothing could be terribly wrong To view and play this entertainment Mecca And for a moment join its vast old song.

Mickey never came and greeted Money was needed everywhere The true artists were in short supply In the shops to my eight year old and even I The silent urge was: Buy! Buy!! Buy!!!.

I will miss the joy of swirling tea cups
The terror of speedy space in a strobe light mountain
Friendly cho cho transport around this teeny town
And memories of the ancient: 'It's a Small World After All.'

But for all the magnetism of marketing hype There's something missing that seemed once to be there And forty six years later scratch my head and wonder Could it simply be this time I had to pay the fare? I HAD TO PAY the fare.

Dividing Words

Bob Kimball's gift came as no small piece of education When he spoke of 'the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, '
I would have thought him mad if not a Harvard man And Paull Tillich's literary executor to boot. He was far too good to me in many ways to ever easily dismiss. The very same experience through Maslow's insight I knew as 'peak experience.' Great was the shock to learn How much is the power Of vocabulary to divide.

Dog Fight Pre-emption

Our dog being more citizen than canine Does not know that he's a dog, Ignores the virtue of humility in his doggy world Being profoundly loved by adult and child there.

If by some grace wisdom ever comes to him He will learn a simple truth It is not wise for small dogs to growl at big Lest intercepting the greater's trajectory They become the object of both their attention and their teeth.

Dog Phonics (Gift/Hearth)

With our young child from Russia We have had to do some work That in the area of dog tricks The difference between a 'shit' and 'sit' Is considerable and H A letter worthy of contention.

d'Orsay Ambush

Monet you taught me That paint can iridesce as snow But van Gogh! That it can speak?

Double Barrel

In the privacy of the polling booth My wife sits a full room away and waits Hers is a greter than usual patience.

The names of two great odysseys paralyze me More than watever their politics may be It is the dual barrels of their lives That make me freeze, Become incapable of decision.

The flashing red light
Tells me I must decide
The weeks of watching them will not abide
I pull the trigger the safety I must release
No, finally I am on the other side
And fire the ballot that only God will ever know.
Daughter comes and retrieves me bleary from this show
This vote is done and to home it's time to go.

Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde

Through morning I can think By bed time I can not Change as dramatic as the title of these lines.

Dreary Day After The President's State of the Union 2007

Fearing that the proper work was never done at start Enhanced by Charlie Rose Grief always for our slain young in uniform (Age taking all else but this capacity for sadness) I guarantee that we are in a mess.

Even the dog being depressed This dreary day after the President's great speech All being more than a function of weather in Texas.

Drinking Water

Water is blah My doctor says aha You drink the stufff And this is good.

Early Morning Light

Of all light I love best The color of early morning gray That grants the form of things Beyond demands of lurid detail

Whose moment is sanctioned By the chorus from my father's clock So that while dead he speaks in steady rhythms

And while Laurie sleeps
I sit with dog upon his couch
Appreciate the candle's flickering power
And gather strength both from quiet and caffeine
To face the deepening textures
Of the coming day.

Early Morning Light Is Best

Early morning light is best
To help me study for my tests
Though almost all great parties I've not known
At least that time was rightly sown
For regenerating energy necessary for the fight
Of the hourly and daily vision God grants to my sight.

Education as an Antidote to Mud

The Army taught me a great lesson
The way to stay out of the mud
Is to go to school.
This formula is as simple as it is true
Alexander Solzhenitsyn has validated it too
And even General Patton has granted us the lesson
That the best use for mud is for education.

Education's Tandem Rig

A great teacher is kinetic art
(as surely as any gal who ever played the pole.)
They move and think and teach
are invested in a way the hirelings are not.
They help us to be true
When navigation may be through
They are invested in values that last.
Charlie Rose frequently forgets it is not just the teacher.
Does the student want to learn?
It takes two horses to pull a tandem rig and
Keep democracy pointed towards true north.

Eight Years Of Silence

Jim Dixon concluded after eight years of monastic silence That he was not so nice I love this priest who could preach on Betty Boop And try to help his flock to see his struggle with a darkness That is inside us all.

Elena's Poem

Mom and Dad kiss together. Because they love each other And they have a little girl Her name is Elena.

Emily Had It Right

Emily had it right An understanding far more profound than her wearing white She did not move in opposition to any thing Allowing her craft to carry her where it would Fame that she wisely let others carry for her in death.

Encouragement For Meditating Swimmers

I promise as one who has waged the struggle Follow the black line even if it takes years Someday the break through will happen and The black line will become an event of indescribable light.

End of Day

When nothing new is found I fear the end of time Failure to sense something sublime This thing I can not name That's held me all the same Through wars and waters ravenous Gratitude even when my pen runs dry.

Engineer and Merchant

The engineers and merchants look the same Priests of our consumer ways But my heart is with the engineers Who will not bend to make a buck Who do not worship the bottom line Who fit product to need and never let a sale Come between their soul and another.

Entitlement

Dog knows the rules After the early morning walk There is to be a biscuit It is not a reward It is an entitlement.

Epiphany

Epiphanies are never planned Soft evening light upon a yellow wall Child and children vaulting in the mall Untucked T shirts that say it all I hate to break her play For epiphanies are never planned And have their beauty once you see.

Eulogy For 'Duke' A Long Dead Dog

Officially he was Othello and black as The Moor
A dog of perfect face
But a little too wide of flank for show perfection.
Of such sweet disposition
MJ literally took ham from his mouth
With only temporary cost of betrayed confusion to his face.

Therefore he must be given the benefit of doubt
For one solitary night when father was away
With stranger he turned completely vicious at the door
And denied evil entry, vetoing mother's gracious spirit.
What that darkness in somatic form intended I will never know
And am convinced to this date we were protected on that night of snow
By a loving lovely Labrador a little too wide of flank for perfect show.

Evening

It is the quiet times we cherish When sunlight fails in brightness And birds celebrate their evening songs And wife goes to market And even the dog almost knows he must be still.

It is the quiet time I cherish with hoot of a distant owl And comfort from scripture of Mother's best tradition.

It is the quiet time I cherish Enough to feel an air caress Enough to close these lines in peace It is the evening times we cherish.

Evening Before Test

Testing evening is the night before the tests When daughter goes to bed before the early hour And I relfect on old percentile scores That couldn't be maintained through out my space Realizing how foolish to have made of my days a race.

Every Poet Needs A Roof

When Robert Frost's home was purchased It made me think that every poet needs a house Poetry is not well written under bridges The sacrifice of Rupert Brooke and others considered So, every poet needs a roof The beauty being very few of us will worship it.

Expanding Cavalcade Of One Liners - First Post

Dappled Light Dances On Brown Screen Bill Grace

Experience - a Poem Dedicated to my Father

Dad told me during World War Two Of an incident he personally knew Where air ship, personnel and crew Were saved by their pilot's experience.

The engine quit on take off
The plane had only two
The pilot dipped the failed wing
And turned to field to safely land.

Dad cared for planes in that great war
He is no longer with us in his burly form
But he would celebrate that pilot
Who cared for 150 and even more
Had the wisdom to put his aircraft in the drink
In hope it would not untimely sink
Enabled the care and rescue that so many gave
Goodness upon our planet that outlasts the grave.

Fable Of The King's Cat

Once there was a wise king Who always greeted his cat with warmth far beyond the cat's station Not surprisingly when other Kings had vermin in their castles He had none.

Face Returned From War

My General's face I know it well Though not as well as wife or child And do not presume upon small acts of service Rendered as salute.

Back from war No change in soul for sure By miracle of grace But a purple line of toil upon his face Makes me celebrate he's with us And assure that soul its need for rest.

Family Emergency Against The Panikhida Service

Wife with mother in a peril of potential death Girth of a continent away Daughter kicks against sleep and me with her all House floating the great chair is at last a pseudo prize. And the melodies of church chant from her native land It soothes though I can not understand a word It sooths as it is her native tongue Nine and fifty nine year old in meeting Brings me to a space I can not name. Brings us to a peace in prelude To sleep as a forgiving drug.

Fan Letter

This quiet poet would have you know Charley Rose I love your show And the many who glitter around your table's womb like black Your atmospheric innovation that helps draw them out And contain the potential for the panic of attack.

But if my understanding through other media is true There is at least one guest who may be lime light through It occurs to me of your vastly distinguished guests All the acting may not all be going on, on the other channels.

Fat Phobic

Two simple things, sugar soda and beer Guarantee for me
The reality of accelerating pounds
Which carries other things
I fear far more.

Faucets That Work Well

My English teachers might not approve this thought
But if I understand the confessional genre of Sharon Olds correctly she might.
It is not just our childhood's that we survive or transcend or by
which we are destroyed.
The present is not a small thing.
An automatic faucet that works truly works well - is not a small thing.
All of these work in the corporate suite
when the sale is made.
It is later that the true test will come
long after the commission has been paid.
A thing that works well is a grand thing.
I appreciate the engineers who make life work smoothly,
for a few this will be the only thank you they ever receive.

FDR Talks

Failed consultation with a King Helping Israel to birth. Fireside chats for a nation. Hitler, Jesus and Isaiha Never underestimate the power of talk.

First Load Of The Day - Confessions Of A House Hubby

Before the phone's pull to reality
At about seven hours of sleep
The brain begins to function with out pills
And having tasted something of the wisdom of the world
Decline to quickly rise and face it.

Within the morning stupor between first energy and sleep An intensity of concentration I plan the first load of laundry Like a field marshall moving divisions Wondering how long they will hold or advance Against the onslaught of this thing called dirt.

First Loan

'First loan interest free'
Shun this money
As you would the siren song
Of drugs with out prescription
One taste of easy dollars
And they have you forever.

First Route Run

Before sunrise - walking dog The glow of the GPS and the map book The hazard blinker on Tell me he is lost Or at the very least off his game.

The cute red car is not too far From one I owned in youth. The newspaper waits in my driveway. He has missed the neighbor's delivery. The dark of a first route run Does not just belong to newsboys.

Five Line Thought On Poetry

A poem can mean next to nothing or a world And a poet can more than write about a beast The energy is in creating And then having something - someday - to share Even if its by an heir.

Flood

The cat turds turned to soup Floors more slippery than ice Clothes required washing twice Even pennies were not secure The flood came and did its thing Never underestimate the power released Of a malfunctioning washing machine.

Florescence and the Angel

The tree is up
The work is done
I wish I could say
It all was fun.

Beautiful toys on generous display Drink with a friend of comrade structure Winter solstice of the pagan year.

STOP! STOP! STOP! STOP! As Jesus came and trod upon earth's sod Our hope that he was truly God Then all this abounding kitch is not cool We need to return to school To learn lessons of an even more quiet sort.

Listen to the clock strike its hour Pray for all its victims This sheen of visiting pagan peace Takes us from the child's much deeper truth.

Foggy Morning

Sometimes the morning start is slow
You can not find your glasses
And wear frames so ugly
Only the military could issue them,
Or some agency purporting to make us equal.
On this day you are glad
For the extra cautions of your life
The care at the view blocked intersection
The parade of potential accidents passing by
When things are normally clear and you skim through
Realizing what could have been the cost
If you had not stopped and meant it
On a foggy morning where you could
See a mile clearly and still miss it.

For Ambitious Parents

Every child can be President Has so much positive ring to it That every parent want to subscribe It is a shame it is a lie.

In that race
The blocks of child hood days
Are not evenly set
A thing so extraordinary in races
The word race can not be used,
Unless what was once the integrity of words
Are things now just to amuse.

S, dear parent - try to relax a little
If your child makes the Senate it would be nice
But there is much success to be had
Hopefull even this lower grade will suffice.

Free Food - A Poem Dedicated to the Community of Workers Who Make 'Daily Bread' a Reality

Free food I know it is a lie. I can not kill that sign even though I want to. Those who come for help will not be charged this much is true, but the food is not free. The driver and the truck who bring it to the church, they are not free. The warehouse is not free. The producers and distributors who give it to us know it is not free. The church is not free. Even Christ's great love was not free. Yes, the sign says: 'Free Food.' It is clever marketing probably even necessary but I know it is not true. There is at least two millenniums of cost.

Friends Leaving

Friends leaving a simple ache You wish them well Hope there's no mistake But despite the necessary action You know a piece of yourself Leaves with them even before they're gone.

Gandhi

This man unknown to my hand, 'seditious... fakir' to Churchill, haunts me. Owning nothing he seems to own my soul, Not even from the solemnity of grave but a flowing river Directs my political soul In directions so unpolitical as to bewilder.

I am not alone. Warner Sallman depicts him in his head of Christ That emerges only as you draw near. A strange thing to be haunted by so formless a ghost.

Genghis Khan Plants a Tree

We call him Genghis Khan
In our private conversations
This man grotesque enough
To merit a police report
For conduct unbecoming a former Marine
Viet Nam having left more than physical scars.

He tried to plant a tree Which wind wrecked Or some other act of God I can't remember. It seeming strange to me To give God credit for this tragedy.

Wife and probably Dog don't like him.
A truck being a formidable and ugly weapon
Yet he has spoken nicely enough to me.
Still I wish his tree had lived
I suspect he has seen enough of death
That dark side of him requires no further feeding.

Genuflection To Spinoza

The greatest question remains
Beyond the circumstances of our lives that form us
Is there a TRUTH
That gently smiles at, weeps with, mocks at, or even more...
Frail human understanding?
Or is the question itself
Only my desperate need for hope?

George C. Marshall's Credo

Having to the best of my knowledge never been published But it looks from history it is fully lived in his quip: 'You can do an infinite amount of good in the world If you do not care who gets the credit.'

George Marshall's Ghost

Forgive me, Sir, for raising you up from recent print
But Kennan's death was front page in Moscow
Containment was one of your grandchildren also!
I have read of Eisenhower and McArthur
Been told by generals of Patton and Bradley
And learned from rather dogged research
That you were scion to a host of lesser greats
The pundits have come to call 'Our Greatest Generation.'
Perhaps in celebration a quote is in order:
'You can do infinite good if you do not care who gets the credit.'
Like Lee the sweet fragrance of your character
Grows stronger with history's gathered fragments.

Goals

Goals are great and give a rudder to the ship That help us go in life from A to B With A to B I have no quarrel For travel often carries education.

But A to B is oft girded by hope of B to C And C to D on on to Z Alpha to Omega our lives simply do not go From psyche this false hope far better that we throw. And if rich enough in faith to substitute a question - simply ask, 'Do I enjoy the struggle of going A to B?' Leaving C to the worry of another.

God and the Combat Simulation Range

The on the border of asphixiation event was a training incident The statistics missed That came from not understanding the proper technique For the combat simulation crawl which in my day was Vastly more of a push with the legs Than a lift of outstretched arms In modified push up style.

The glow of the machine gun tracers
Were close enough to light the night's sand
You could not stand up to risk a bullet in the head Or even worse - the attention of a drill sergeant,
So you craawled forward in perfect harmony with others
Which was the intention of the exercise.

Asphixiation is not a pleasant thing
The Romans knew how to to use it well
For a thing today we call political terror
So in my night of greatest crisis when a cross came so near
I prayed with the greatest intensity of my life to date:
'Dear God help me! ' and I felt a presence
And in this God did.

There is a sequel to this old soldier's story
Of being a chaplain's assistant many years later
Being told by a patient in the great cancer hospital
'I don't need your product.'
The product being: God or spirit or religion or divinity
or some other poor derivative of what I felt that night.
I am sure this man also prayed once
I am also sure he did not feel a presence
Of an incident the statistics missed.

God Gave A Better Course

There is some enormous grief within me That waits to grieve its day Why else would some old poet's bio Touch me with a hint of tear.

There was little room for poetry in youth Mrs. Broadwell Shrugged and said: "It's all right." When brought words of an observed eagle's flight. It put me off a year or two Her confirming shrug of life's indifference But snow has beauty and it inspired anew, What became words of poetry in national print That slowly began to thaw The curse that alcohol can pass along.

A President was what they wanted And a poet was what they got, Not that any of us knew this in the intervening years. From what I've seen of politics God gave a better course than they could see And besides, I have always liked to eat And there may even be an eternity.

Goodness

Of all the goodness that has touched my days Very little of its form has stayed But some trace of its residual within my soul Defies this process of my growing old And when my body can not push the ink you read When my greed is eternally still Goodness at least attempted here Will in the madness of our sphere Tinkle a Ittle in the daily wind As if its form had stayed.

Gopher On A Tank Field

Having gotten not too gloriously squashed on more than one occasion and very nearly so on that which gives the spine to leisurely write I have learned it is not wise for gophers to argue with tanks The tanks always being the winner But better to seek a hole and let them pass over To observe their peculiar rage another day Almost always guaranteeing eventual destruction.

Grays

Age's gray on top Gray boards in back The gray of unburnished statues Gray is the color most often time takes That year's alone do not always make.

Guidance for the Electorate in a Presidential Year

I have only one formula to share
Vote for the candidate you find most humble
The temptation to hubris being beyond
The capacity of most to measure.
S/he will have much to learn in office
Not having to climb over a mountain of ego Will accelerate this process,
Hopefully to the benefit of all
Including our children who are so often
Forgotten in the great councils.

Gun Shop

The bad guys ride and roam In playgrounds like your home This shop exists To correct their lack of poetry.

Gymnastic Competition

I approve the civility of the sport
That injures less than almost any other
Age, sex, skill, experience - all the factors
That determine who will win,
A winner's platform oft with room for seven
The beauty of their costumes and youth
An environment where all are winners
Gravity defied and even a nation blessed
By the lessons that can be learned.

Haiku in an English Format

A wind through bamboo Paper marks can not tell you Sound so beautiful.

Hamburger Girls

They are young. They are fun. They know I like them. 'Would you like some ketchup? ' 'No. I can not have it.' The fries are hot though I am not Yet still we love each other.

Hard

The man was hard
Meeting the executioner's needle
His choice of scripture was hard
His care for his family was hard
His murder of the pleading captain was hard
An obscure nun was the only soft he ever knew

Hartmann Acknowledged

The case that went to war Has gone for child In both an extreme of service. But child compared to war An impossible comparison After both deeds are done.

Hate Mail

It was my first experience of hatred electronically conveyed From far away but still Some horrible wound must have been given To prompt the fire that even wires could not cool.

I will revisit the offending poem
Continue for a while the post mortem already under way
To wound is not my pleasure, I know a better communion.
But it may come down to this,
As one who repents an arrogance towards Shelley in my youth,
It just may be that what was written
Despite hatred's fire either far or near
Was simply this one soul's truth.

Heart Compass

Dad left on Upstate Acreage His love for that he did. Mine spread across three continents Extremely hard to find.

The final issue may not be what the world can see Or others think of us but a question so simple and complex If asked enough to terrify:

Where leads the compass of our hearts to a destination true?

Hemingway's Garage Sale Poetry

Our digital age is wonderful Last night I was learning From Harvard University in Massachusetts While sitting comfortably in Texas But remember this There will never be a sale of famous poet work For twenty five cents or even fifty Unless at a flea market or garage sale.

Here I Can Be True

Here I can be true
To a thing or two
No where else
In a land where everything
Depends on relationships.

Here The Poets Sing Together

The net has united what civil commerce could not join - Frost laboring twenty years for a two bill tip No wonder there was a darkness to his soul, For isolation was his true reward and punishment.

We who have come after have no excuse For we too must write but have the grace Of knowing of each others words and place And in appreciation cheering on The terrible isolation broken by the power of distant love.

How would Emily if she were with us now Ever withstand the corruption of such adulation by her peers? A safety - it seems - that only death or the greatest faith can guarantee.

High School Reunion Of A Sort

Perhaps it was the approach of Mother's death
OR that I had missed the group's grand gathering for its twenty fifth
For a hot date in Saudi Arabia
OR Donna the great object of my adolescent desires
Though still buxom had added a matronly air
OR she had outgrown the arrogance of letter wearing sweater days
When passing in vacant halls she would always acknowledge
Anyone but me long before the term 'geek' was invented
But her glee over the coming of ice cream for dessert
Made me realize the vast gulf that had grown
Between my early lust and knowing
The quality of public rest rooms in Paris and in Fez.

High Tech Respite

Sara Teasdale knows how to celebrate beauty:
'Blue waves whitened on a cliff, ...
And children's faces looking up
Holding wonder like a cup.'
But I am also gatrateful for what the web can give
Plug 'nature' into Google image
It is sun and sea that helps calm my evening upon a screen
And grants respite in ending to a treacherous day.

Home As A Silent Cathedral

I oft feign sleep till they are gone
It is not I love them less
Than the silence of gray morning
The chime of clock and peep of watch
Even errant mosquitoe
These are the distractions
Life itself is the distraction.

The paradox is that in the abhorred silence We can be made whole If love is present in the walls Even God can be found beyond them.

COMMENT: The phrase 'if love is in the walls' is an acknowledgement of the ministry of Chaplain James Doffin of the United States Navy. Jim once told me that he visited the brig of his ship every day if he had a sailor in confinement. At least one of his commanders appreciated this greatly.

Hope

Hope is the thing deep within us
That flesh, though vanquished, can not conquer.
It is the seed that rights in hurricanes
The untoward listing ship
Pulling on mains beyond salvation
Careing not for the rope shredded hands forever lost
Which understood as grace in calmer water
Was perhaps God's subtle force that saved the ship.

Hope For Creeping Age

What if all that matters is not matter? And what we think is death is dawn -Dawn we do not understand and have never understood.

Something stands beyond our moment Eternal - warm or cold - near or far A presence unknown but knowing Hope for creeping age in flesh.

Hot Spot

How time does change so many things.
In youth a 'hot spot' was a place to go and drink
and perhaps in a moment of exuberance even dance upon the bar
Or a geography in a sex manual.
With age it is a place related
To species that are endangered.

House at Night

The house at night is best
When wife and daughter rest
The strivings of the day
They seem to fade away
and leave a perception so profound
Even errant water is retrieved
There is only the fear of those who thieve
Cat and dog understand it too
A house at night how different
Than the house at day.

House Beautiful

She took me home for lunch and It was like walking into
The pages of 'House Beautiful.'
Over tuna fish I confessed my surprise
Knowing she was not happy.
'Yes, Bill, but I always want more.'
If I could understand this tyrant called 'more'
Perhaps I could help heal the planet a tad
Just a little before leaving
'Enough' might even beccome a holy word.

House, Room, Coffin

Mother alerted me with her progression
That the wit's thing about little boxes
Is quite serious in terms of all coming out the same
There is only one thing strong enough to break this gravity's glue
To use the antidote Jesus, and quite a few others used, - prayer
Or meditation as a second best prize.

How the World Works

Will you leave a donation on the curve? Yes. The truck comes
The young men are hustling hard.
The coffee maker with glass pot,
The portable black and white television set,
The aerodynamic children's toy:
Are all airborne. The set first hits the pavement.
The young men will meet the goal exacted of them.
Quantitative again has triumphed over qualitative
But I will not give to them again.
It is 'Bomber ' Harris, Viet Nam, Enron
At my front door.
At sixty I can almost smell
When numbers have escaped their throne
And rule almost as a god.

Hubris

I learned this lesson from my fathers well
To ignore the wreckage of a desk or room
As surely as a soul that should trespass against my path
That feared not even God the burden to greatness being so severe.
Yet grace granted a finer vision with the high horse dump
And days to repent this terrible passion of earlier years
The struggle with the dark hand of self
That can reach for this throat remains
Though more caring hands than I can count or even half deserve
Have helped grant the humor that in this darkness
Stays the power of its terrible force.

Huckleberry Finn's Conclusion Poetically Reinterpreted

If you can afford them Have both cats and dogs for company People are nice too if you are daring But cat and dog can coexist together And are more faithful than the later species.

Hurricane

A hurricane in Houston assasinates my sleep
Its winds howl across the air waves
They will reach me in the morning
The moon has a strange glow
The television's animations - its terrible sounds
Keep my old friend's memory close as
Pavarotti's voice plays biography on the educational channel and
I ride under my blanket supported by the great blue couch
In a 'fierce and beautiful world, '
Which is a translation of a Russian's title
I have never read.

I Am Grateful

I am grateful
For those who read me here
This tiny part of poetry's vast sphere
An honest declaration being due
I am grateful for those read me here.
Though my failures include
Not always communicating back to you
Still, I am grateful for those who read me here.

I Think Therefore I Blog

Not a poem but too good a phrase to leave behind in my intellectual travels.

(It is stolen without permission from the 'Jolly Blogger' at jollyblogger.typepad.com/jollyblogger/2006/03/how_we_do_theol.html

Idyllic Imperfect

The happy chug of the washing machine Washing whites left overnight to soak, Daughter's weather forecast for the day Between bites of breakfast pastry, Mom sent off with a kiss, The front porch and Night lights through out the house turned off, The shampooed dog of yesterday at side, POETRY. An almost perfect departure into the day If only the kid could have mustered Energy for an old man hug.

If We Are From The Stars

If we are from the stars as Lindbergh taught me Then parts of Jesus, Peter, Paul, Mohammed and Budha flow within my veins, But just as surely Hitler, Stalin, Gengis Khan and a host of lesser rogues.

We are as Barb Marquee wisely taught me light and shadow These primal gatherings within not so easily tamed or directed upowards I can not help but suspect the stuff of spiritual struggle Enough for a life time on this planet seduced by flesh.

Ike Receives His Last Salute

When Eisenhower was buried
With well deserved stately pomp
Omar Bradley was in uniform
And with a palsied hand of age
Raised it in final salute of his great chieftain
Giving television an electric moment
And affirming the bond of a great lieutenant
Not even death could break.

Image

Maiden by door

Sparrow to wing

Sunlight on stone

Straw goes to home

Spring!

In Christ There Is No Desert - (Snippets)

In Christ we can be a family that knows no place no time. In Christ there is no border, class or kind. In Christ there is a fortress the world can not assault.

In Christ suffering holds no shame and sin can loose its sting. In Christ there is the finer mind,
And instinct true to lead us through refining fires.

In Christ there is no desert and no death.

In Memory Of Christopher Reeve

There is always so much happening
Driven to be seen
Driven to be in the eye of the hurricane
Driven to be driven or seemingly secure
TO STOP FOR THREE OR FOUR HOURS SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE:
To see the magic in the most common things,
To think forty years ahead for others,
To reflect on realities beyond the yes or no of politics,
To know that sacrifice is truly noble
And that there is a final test for time
A thing called love beyond capacity for action
or even comprehension.
No, we must find this time
And then turn it on itself with thanks or perish.

In Passage A Poem For Susan Wood

Not all the crosses were on Calvary Hill
The Romans an inventive and expansive people
Used their snarl and bite to keep entire populations in line.
An instrument of terror more than justice
The consequence of placement
Could take days or even weeks to consumate.

Not all crosses were on Calvary Hill
Susan knew first hand
They come in many styles and sizes
Enogh to fit us all and sure enough to find us
At what seemed almost the golden hour.
Subtle, she bore hers well
The suffering her quiet frame would bear
Susan was not a complainer and only a few would know.

We have trouble with this cross thing It stops the advertisers cold and Some famous theologians have been know To get nervous hiccups at just the thought.

Susan is in heaven now Beyond a hundred million light years from this time and place God's tears have washed the stain of turmoil from her face and Healed her form to spiritual stature An earthly husband would have to work to know.

Still we shake our heads and wonder
At the savagery of her cross and
Trust that power greater than ourselves
That most call God and I 'The Other' out of awe and wonder
That she at last is free
Held by light that never fades or fails through all eternity.

Incident On A Night Rural Road

The true hero
In the collision that didn't happen
Was the driver who swerved
Throwing his car with his family in it
Into the road friendly field.

In the face of death I loose my snootiness Declaring it was in the goodness of God's grace A nonincident-incident, neither of us being hurt.

My shock from how close we came to disaster His relief I wasn't a crazed racist. Instinctively we realized the night was our enemy, With a black rural road where I was ill experienced, And not each other.

Injury

There is a lot of injury in life
Do not expect too much from those you love
For in the final tallies
I have reason for strong suspicion
That what we gave is more important
Than what we didn't receive.

Inscriptions

Upstairs the Bible Mom gave me
Over twenty years to find the inscription to give an errant son
Downstairs of smaller size the same Moroccan leather
Never to be inscribed gift of a good Baptist
Who could not understand that Unitarians too were questing for truth.
Both honored and treasured books
The Baptist's inscription being written on a heart.

Insight From Jacques Ellul

In fourth grade Grandma Grace gave me What theologian Ellul would call The primary symbol of modern man A watch currently succeeded by the cell phone To keep us safe in the bondage of chronos Till kairos can lure us to the rescue of our days.

Intellectual Capital

Those who have limited intellectual capital Must hold what they have for all they are worth Lest letting the little that they have loose In the great paradox of education They would have vastly more.

Iron Men

Tito was an iron man
Sadam was one too.
Given the post partum
Fractures we have seen
It is best that we respect
Machiavelli's ancient wisdom
That is sustained,
That in matters of state
It is better a prince be feared than loved,
Despite the unofficial rose
Observed on Frederick's grave.

'It Takes A Village To Raise A Child'

My red neck friends disdain her
Or hold her in open contempt
But she has given us a truth in a land of cities
It takes a village to raise a child.
So who were: Daisy and Pappy Millet? Don and Esther Urquhart? Ken Gardner and Jean Thompson? Sphen and Danny Loman? Jo Strain, George VanClef and Madeline Maurie?
Who were these people and others who raised me?
(The names that are not enshrined here)
You do not have to even know all their stories
To know their truth
It takes a village or at the very least
A church of great heart to help raise a child.

Jesus' Christmas Gift

In this one in whom we see
So much of divinity
I see the terrible isolation in which he lived
In a time long before the therapists
Could receive and hold the depths of what we are
Or even use such as a spar
To keep us from parts dark and powerful.
Christ's isolation was terrible and complete and
In it turning to his God
He gave us all his Christmas gift.

Jesus Did Not Charge

Jesus did not charge for services Oh consumer society, reflect.

Jesus on the Installment Plan

The great purchases of my life are three Wife, Jesus and the military The first two still being paid Military days are what is staid.

JFK On Poets

 $^{\prime}...$ it will make the world a little better when the politician's understand about poetry and the poets understand about politics.'

JFK's Salute

My iron willed father did not vote for Democrats And 'Jack' was no exception. So it seemed extremely strange that at his funeral-Where the world's mighty marched in rout step And a nation shocked with grief lay still before its tubes-That Dad's eyes watered in farewell.

No more than five fingers could count in all his days This act for a man he never met who charmed him, Who in his prior life choose Richard Nixon As the better vote.

John Ciardi's Ghost

There sleeps beneath our plastic roof
A frail piece of Russian soil
Enough of who I am for me to know no other.
She sleeps and I turn from diversion
To better hear celestial silence and pray
That a spirit will be with us to lay a keel
Amidst the swirl of eddies
Beseting lives smarting from life's many currents.
And with this - strange grief
that so many do not care About the living of straight lines
Or even engagement with the struggle
That ever keeps my heart from scorn of saints.

Kaizen In Poetry

Poem Hunter and the others have brought here a great democracy Some might even say a beginning to the end of therapeutic theocracy And although poets write and write with hope of being read We often fail and are ignored instead It is well we remember in this dilemma To strive for better form and clearer phrase Continuous improvement of our craft with God given days For though poetry counts for little in this world's weal Perhaps by unkown alloy we help keep The universe from becoming total steel.

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Leo Rockas' Touch Three Decades Plus

I've seen enough of wealth to know Its energy can go for show That leaves the soul quite hollow.

Socrates gave us wise advice, Its cost to him his earthly life, That cared infinitely more for the integrity of the quest Than the immortality he gained in the minds of many.

Soc says we have a compass for the strife Inclusive of the fact we can not deify the wife Or some lesser God as we wage the noble struggle To know who we truly are And then be true.

Lesson

If willing to but slightly stretch, (With luck with sunshine on your back) Paris will teach you even without its language That you can eat both well and cheaply, To save your money for the museums.

Lesson from Bill Moyers

Bill Moyers confirmed
That in the Gulf of Tonkin
L.B.J. raced to judgement,
Confirmed the splendid tutorial gift
Wayne Morris gave so long ago.
As with Pilate and Jesus
It is almost always wise
Not to 'rush to judgement'
If you can possibly avoid
Going over the edge of this cliff.

Lieutenants

Lieutenants are the key
If we can trust Friedman's great study of Lee
And we remember McArthur and Ike,
Reported to Marshall who is forgotten,
And Marshall to Roosevelt who is remembered Still, in all great things lieutenants are the key.

Lift Off

The former pilot in me knows
The greatest danger is in take off and descent
The child at window does not know
The danger she is in with counting play of whizzing numbers
I touch my wife for comfort
Wisely knowing I must trust another's greater strength
To safely see us up and down.

Like An Acolyte

Like the acolyte of youth
I tend the night lights of our home
With strange proclivity for nourshing their glow
That in darnkness makes a statement of decisive show
Against the saturating power of the night
Not needed with the dawn of day.

Lincoln's Greater Gift

Abe Lincoln freed the slaves
But his greater gift was this
For which he paid high price
That he held no fear of truth
This thing that could set all free
But binds the Pilots of this world.

Line Worth Copying 21 December 2008

Found on a thrift store poster: 'Truth is the light that shines through the fog with out altering it.'

Listening to the Customer

It was the customer Who spotted the plane's hydraulic leak Sometimes much more than sales travel On listening to the customer.

Litany for a Reader of Rilke

As dog and couch and candle night line up I write.
As the city's sirens momentarily hush I write.
As the lights go out at Pat's house across the street I write.
I write, and not being in too much pain, Even can rejoice I live.

Little Hitlers

The little Hitlers of the world are not a few Their right to 'lebenstraum' not ending at your back Instinct far too true to the attack The question being how to give them their due Forgiveness and inquiry helping greatly too If we do not want to become one of them.

Little League Minors

Bright sun, soft breeze
The teddy bear gently makes an underhand toss.
Slice! Whack! Twang! Run!
Thirty inches of athlete pegs the ball.
Fun as fundamentals
Minnesota summer.

Little Loves

LIfe has lots of little loves:
A full orb moon at two am
Sky of broken mackerel skin
Smile of the young burger girl
Neighbor with daughter at Halloween's door
Dog's cat policeing
Wife soundly sleeping when I can not.

Little Peasant Dot

I am a little peasant dot amidst the greater sea And certainly the important or even self important Will not invest much more than a passing glance at me But let my stroke be needed for their schemes Let alone the hopes and power resident in their dreams Then watch this dot become beam at the center of their eye.

Little Screen - Big Screen

In this age of the big screen
I own only a little screen
The influence of great teachers long ago and also
Something about 'cultural waste land' and a
Pubescent crush on that gorgeous red haired english teacher
Both being present enough to give up the little screen
When the only big screen was in town.

Soon there will be no screen
At the big scream
It is ok.
Books have almost always been my blood and
This screen things only being a half century old
Which in the longer view
Makes it only a youngster
Of revolutionary dimension.

Little Touch Of Soul

There is in distant Russia a little touch of soul That as age creeps upon me becomes a more and more A subtle thing that made a house a home A subtle truth unkown amidst the budding joy Of her brief visitation here.

Locker Room Philosophers

It was the shower to be exact
The antagonists were naked
At thirty seven years past the event
I can still see his face.
The victim's face is lost.
It - the conversastion - was heating up
I ducked out.
'What about the men who were lost? ' he demanded.
The response could not have been adequate
They came to blows right there in the shower room
A bloody nose for one at least, if memory serves
The man who asked the question and gave the blows
Was not a bully, if memory serves
Training for Viet Nam was not a happy deal, if memory serves.

Loves

I love the smiles of the old Bespeaking great truths not easily told

I love the smiles of the young Bespeaking deep hope in life that lives within

I love cloudless moonlight upon the quay That for beauty's power is as great as day

I love the beauty of the dance that reveals the latent power of human form

I love the men of forgotten honor Who gave the foundations of our day Who never allowed a lie to stay Long enough beside them to stain The storied hour that history's truth can wondrously play

I love the memory of maiden's bright And apologize to them for my great fright Not knowing the depth of my Puritan blood And capacity for Pharasaic slight

I love the startle of my daughter's Morning full fairwell kiss And all her other surprises that I will miss When cradled in the earth The test will come if love is ever broken

I love the sacrificial brightness of my land Strong enough to stop that dark Fascist band And blunt the terrors of Stalin's expanding reign Restoreing to world humanity its chance for decency again.

I love the quiet moment with holy writ When words from different time and place Help me to better see my present place With eyes far greater than my own Life for a moment in the divine zone.

I love these things and many more Come visit here and touch the growing store For God has granted fire that may yet endure And will open here still further doors Of what just one soul alone can love.

Marine Corps Dog Lady

When the threads were bronze
That kept me seperate
But before they turned to black
That would divide me even more
I met her in a grocery check out line
By what we mortals call chance.

If it was God or Devil that made the meeting Only life beyond the grave can proof But how strange that one so briefly met Could cut and deeply This ever striving soul.

Lean and forward and beautiful She knew chaos when she saw it And dispatched two pennies To my rescue.

I wish I had said thank you
On the spot and invited her
To lunch or coffee or whatever
Was to be with so little introduction.

But I was fearful of her beauty And an intensity of yearning More powerful than sex Her simple act of care had sparked.

Spark to dry tinder a fire makes And months later I wonder at my cowardice That hid behind stories of Will Stretch And the gal he married who had turned down A matrimonial proposal from 'Chesty' Puller a legendary marine.

A ring on my finger
And a ring on hers
These things attraction could not erase.
And hierarchy has its' morbid logic
But still in moments of dry marriage
I think about her
And feel the pull of two pennies
That may have carried more
Than clerks balancing their cents.

Mark Twain's Daughter

I have heard the rumor
From one vastly more lettered than myself
That Mark Twain in his dotage
Had a circle of young women
With whom he met in public
There was no impropriety - no scandal
But Twain's daughter disolved the group
For fear of censure.

My eleven year olds first gymnastic meet Filled with the resplendent energy of the young Even their pain and failure Has taught me what the old man lost Convinces me that pharises are alive and well And with us to this very day.

Martyr in 2005

The New York Times informs of the death
Of Mr. Naim Rahim Yacoubi - an Iraqi
Who having cast his vote was killed by
Blast after a successful delivery of tea to election workers.
I would call him brother,
Though we have never met,
And baptize this adoption
With a tear for those of kindred flesh.

In some distant Galaxy
I hope God writes his name
In stars upon soft nights and if intuition can hold truth - suspect,
THAT spirit loves his fetching tea in kindness
Even more than the courage of his vote.

Material Boy Approaching The Crib

Bob Lee's great line deserves an encore: 'Materialism is the philosophy that has captured the 20th century with out firing a shot.'

My daughter of eight thinks the material quite sublime prefering Disney in pink. My wife more discerning, I struggle with my demons too.

The demon says it must have more. 'Feed me this pitance if you will and then you can have peace.' It changes and morphs, sings and screams and plays a 1,000 tricks to keep its silent hold upon my soul. Clever beyond my words to catch, it can not hide the hunger of its bottomline that always asks for more.

Perhaps Nancy has given something of the antidote against another, much more agreed upon, poison. JUST SAY, NO! Cheerfully remembering want is not need and what you truly seek is beyond the mechanics of money the purchase of a deeper self.

Max Rosenthau

Father Cleary sat at table with Max many a day
But I don't think he rated a bounteous gift when Max came to visit
Both were guests in the great house acrosss the street of youth
Father for years and Max for yearly one week stints.
The last time Max came was when his wife died
A man so profoundly broken
Even a fourteen year old could start to understand
That the desperation of his giref was the force that drove Max to Mass
Where Father from his view could not give communion to a Jew
And snapped the neck of something deep within me
That despite Father's great friendship
Never came back though I never said a word to Father Cleary.

Meditation Before a Fluorescing Angel

The tree is up
The work is done
I wish I could say
It's all ben fun.

Beautiful toys on generous display Drink with a friend of old comrade structure Winter solstice of the pagan year STOP! STOP! STOP! STOP!

As Jesus came and trod upon this sod
And if its true that he was God
Then all this abounding kitch is not cool
We need to return to school
To learn lessons of an even more quiet sort
Listen to the clock strike its hour and
To pray for all who are its victims
This sheen of visiting pagan peace
Solstice of an ancient faith
Takes us from this child's much deeper truth.

Meeting For Worship

The night time ritual is this:
After story and the Bible story
Only the hall light burns
And in a relative darkness we dwell
This seven year touch of life that is our daughter
She supine in my Mother's old bed
I sitting on the white toy chest.
She often asks that I remain a while
And almost always I comly
And after shenanigans a silence comes
In which I wonder about God
Or perhaps even the ways of politicians.
It is our silent meeting for worship.
Almost always it is holy
Despite the missing facing bench.

Meltdown Genesis

Realtor's sign:

POOL No down payment Low monthly payments Bad credit no problem Licensed agent.

Memorial Day 2006

It is a decent thing to grieve their loss Their lives in unexpected Hi Lite upon history's altar Their was no will to death We pray their valor was a vision of service.

The young Marine with wire hands haunts me Stopping in salute before the President's casket His wire hands so visual a reminder of sacrifice My mind can not escape that wire hand raised in final salute It makes me salute the terrible loss - the unconscionable sacrifice -Of men I have never met closer than a newspaper And raise my trembling hand in return salute Of an inadequate acknowledgement of debt.

Mercy Arc - (1996 chapbook)

Ark of mercy Upon a dark night sea Your portals framed in light Whisper, fears to free.

A mercy Ark of vaulted steel This war's wounded will not see Ark of mercy your light tells God's great grace towards me.

Milk and Cookies

Milk and cookies end the day
A most strange way to welcome night
But night comes and sight is lost
The immediacy of cold and sweet
Seems to help the inevitable surrender to sleep
When will's tryanny is for the most part less or lost
Milk and cookies a good institution to help end the day
Especially when it seemed to move
Very much in its own determined way.

Miss Dupre Remembered

Marooned at lunch with the lovely couple Perhaps it could even be expected Of one who flunked exploratory French, That the shackle of not understanding Could only have been loosened -As it is with almost all great things -Thirty years before.

Mixed Day

The holiday brings the late afternoon call A friend's son has been killed We know it is too much for her to bear though we know she will Still, I grieve this world Where it can be a mother who has to bury a son.

Moderation Is The Key

Moderation is the key
Buddha and Bill Grace guarantee.
Holywood procliams that: 'Greed is good! '
Details of the economic mess tells us that all of us should
Master a more wise model if at all we could.
Which leads us to other kingdoms beyond the buck
Moderation is still the key unless you have the greatest luck.

Mom's Only Sin

Mom's only sin
Was that she didn't love the books
Her brother did - became the doctor
Her sister did - became G.M.'s top dog before Toyota
She had her Latin lover
My Father, it was her only other sin.

More Than Money

It is too simple to say
That greed had escaped its cage
Once there was a sense in the land
Of a thing called honor
You did not buy a house
You did not hope to keep
You did not make a loan
You knew could turn to stone.
The failure here is more than money.

Morning Litany

Would you like an egg?
No thank you.
Would you like some orange juice?
No thank you.
Would you like some milk?
No thank you.
Would you like some hot chocolate?
No thank you.
Would you like some toast?
Yes, please.

Morning's Cat Politics

Black jumps right And Red jumps left But in the center of the bed There is always a cat.

Morning's Cat Visitation

The morning visitation of the cat
Is such I do not want her to scat
Though the kissing thing is far too much
To mix with King David's Psalms and such
It is enough she cuddles near
Knows there is little she has to fear
But my concern is that the world will never work As these four paws experienced As peace is often something of a quirk.

Morning's Silence

In morning's deep silence I know that they are there Mother, Father, Aunts, Uncles - others who though gone could care Great teachers, mentors, class mates - team mates who are no more Rogue's for leaven and girl friends long from touch Especially those fond illusions destined to never touch back Or perhaps too beautiful to consider anything less than perfection In silence they all speak and kiss - but only in silence.

Mother Quoted Browning

One clear day mother quoted Browning: 'God's in his heaven, all's right with the world.' With beloved son at side all was right in Mom's world I won't tell you the response.

Mother Theresa's Verdad

He looked a little like Jesus but the face was too thin to model. The hair was the right length but a little too oily for Hollywood. At dinner or lunch he told this story I believe to be true. He went to India because he wanted to work for Mother Theresa. She met with him and asked: 'Why do you come here to serve me when there is such spiritual poverty in your own country?' And she sent him home. David spent at least the next three years of his life in seminary, where we met, trying to answer the good Mother's question.

Mother Wanted Harvard

Mother wanted Harvard What she did not understand Was that all that she truly wanted for me Would be granted by a greater hand.

Mr. Kaiser's Greatness

When Henry Kaiser had a son he named him Edgar It is hard to be the son of a great name From young Kaiser lessons are learned The world does not easily understand. I had to decline his invitation to bridge But kept his chapbbook gift 'thank you' letter. 'Passage' was inspired by the power of his jet. Most I love him for the story I heard Of his care for a toilet beneath the dignity of his accountant. It is not only a woman who can stoop to conquer.

Mrs. Goebbels

My wife convinced me
That the cat I thought was ugly
Was mine and hence her need for hers.
As in all acts of propaganda an element of truth
That got her, her desired second cat.

Mundane Things

It is in these mundane things
The cup of coffee, the child, cat, dog
That we must find our life
Let me dare not forget the wife
Protecting these calling us to our strife.
With age the grand has grown greatly suspect:
'Deus vult.'
'the world safe for democracy'
'iron curtain'
'the savior of Western Christian civilization
against the Bolshevick menace'
'Coke gives life'
Mundane things looking
Infinitely more worth of our trust.

My Friend's Mom

At 96 she's seen the strange terror of 911
And victory in the great war
We did not know we'd win
The deaths of daughter-husband, late birth of son
Love of countless cats and dogs
This fraction of the village that helped keep me safe
From evils that roam childhood's way
A life always in my heart to stay.

News Photograph

The great man's picture was in the paper And later in God's process. I did not know the paper's power to change What God sees the same.

Nickel and Dime

The bank offers an attractive interest rate
But charges for a counter check
Nickel and dime.
The airline offers an attractive fare
But charges when you check your bag
Nickel and dime.
We live in a time of nickel and dime
Where the only safety you could even begin to find
Is a struggle with an inner monster deep within
That helps avoid a place called sin.

Night Crawler

Feeling - feeling very slowly - my way into the bed room Finding dog with touch of toe Before the visual purple can kick in Makes me rethink garden creatures and There being no dishonor in crawling when in the dark.

Night Flag - 7 (patriotic poetry)

Our flag at home lives in a window Blunts with stained plastic strong morning rays And is dwarfed on Vets, Memorial, and The Fourth by a fabric cousin.

My wondering wife thinks it strange practice The time spent adjusting to correct back light For when sun fails in the neighborhood It is in darkness it shines in glory - scarlet and white.

Perhaps those passing by will notice; Perhaps not even paper boys now they are no more; Perhaps - perchance - because it is the bunting, Of our valiant dead in blue -Regardless, to me it is a sacred thing This flag that shines at night This flag of comfort to half century plus of sight.

Night Light

Ten night lights Cast back the dark Two are always on and Register against the day.

Of the other eight My conduct towards This slate is One of care For things so fair To deny night Even a fraction Of its power.

Night Light - 4

At bed time with acolyte precision
The night lights are turned on
First, the Mickey Mouse in daughter's room
Then downstairs bath and kitchen nook,
So that slowly in darkness
The house in silence is lit.
A strange ritual in the high sunset of my years
For one who has lived so many of Kipling's minutes
And strives to this very hour.

But it is to me a comfort that quiet light can see Darkness through to day For my hope is that in the dark some unseen hand May grant me quiet light till my dark shall turn to day.

Night Light On My Walk

Night light on my walk
A pleasant October temperature in Texas
Stray cat on porch - content.
Daughter models our latest hunch from the thrift store
The 'Russian Blue' strokes my foot
Assures me life's ok.
Wife reads in her big chair.
I read Laura Ingalls Wilder to kid.
Night light on my world.

Night Lights

Like acolytes of old
I tend the night lights our our home
Sometimes before the bed time hour of child
With subtle textures of light tailored to fit our space
Each nook and cranny of the place And off!, with irrelevance of bright morning light.
Almost no light in any Chapel or Cathedral space has caught me more
Than tending these lights of the new cathedrals of our hearts.

Night Rising

It seems strange to me
Not knowing if I am hot or cold
That I look at numbers
Which seem to reassure my vertigo
That at least the question was ok
Despite my lack of answer.

Nine Cities Of Six Lines

New York is ultimate but too old a memory to know San Fran in Fall which is there summer Prague, Paris and London see first across the sea Berlin for a once divided world Venice to debunk the hype Casablanca - Fez when you've seen the rest.

No Time For Pets

As one who had no time for pets It seems most strange Their introjection should be Such a source of comfort.

Noetic Spirit

There is another spirit that claims us At least if we are not on our guard, It will convince us by every psychological means To buy and buy and buy and that numbers hold the truth.

Yet we feel, having everything, something is missing. Saint Augustine has a great clue for us: 'Our hearts are restless till they rest in thee.' God's spirit so different than noetic spirit.

Noetic spirit, Goebbels understood it well Commissioned Riefenstahl to help consolidate The fuhrer's power. A day of national mourning When the Army was lost at Stalingrad.

Our spiritual pverty is in our prevalent theology Not how many angels on the head of a pin But our love of the car in the drive way Or a thousand other idols, some I would be ashamed to name.

Noetic spirit has changed our land, our land the world. Television may be the great herald of its coming. I do not know an exact point of divide. Sacrifice a word known only to our soldiers. The man in the film said: 'Plastic!'

Obama's Challenge

The challenge for our new President
Is to see beyond bad theology.
Especially our visual ones,
To think problems through to a third level,
To help us all be a little more safe,
A little less arrogant,
A little more true to what America might mean
If we were a little less of a consumption machine.

Observation at a State Competition

If I had the courage to be arrested Perhaps I could have intervened The pre-pubescent child, The pock marked skin of the grandmother, The hair of the grandmother pulled tight in a bun, The medals of the child The bright red, white and blue fabric holding a fleet of heavy medals around her neck, Stained by tears of guilt or rejection -She - the child - had not taken first in all places. Shamed by the powerful grandmother Shame she was not first in everything Shame ten years of therapy would not lift. I ache for that child and a society Where only the top rung of the champions platform counts Ultimately life will prove We are all champions When the grandmother is dead When these words are no longer read When life is seen as a process and not a point.

Observing Trash Man

The inexperienced garbage rider
Inspected the white bag outside the recycle bin
And tossed it into the truck,
Making the second route's task easier by removing an item.
This nudged my liberal guilt into the realization
That even dog shit can be misunderstood as to its value
If proper packaging is in an improper vicinity.

Ode to a Pop Corn Kernel - 1

Hail to thee blithe kernel!
Great assuager of the petty hunger
Born from a violent burst
Phoenix rising from an oil bed
Buttered legions that allay
Our empty stomachs in distress
Greasiness spreading from bowl to hands.

How it is that we abuse you,
Munch and crunch and sorely use you,
But if, oh golden kernel, you despiar Remember - that if we are fair,
The cow is great
But hasn't teeth which need repair.

Of Blessings and Stars

I don't know of blessings Why they come to me Nor why others seem More fortunate at life's lottery.

Perhaps it is a gracious Lord Perhaps just blind fate That being blessed with so much I just don't seek much more to take.

It was not always so
It will not always be,
Yet in these times I wonder
When for a moment the daily strife seems far,
Could it just possibly be
That upon some very distant star
There's an ultimate harmony
Whose days I hope to touch.

Of Coffee Color and Time's Benefit

The coffee people understand Much about perception and the benefit of time In declaring on each cup on demand bag: 'Color develops before fully brewed.'

Of Darkness And Projection

At Columbia Ruth was friends with Frost's daughter Through Aunt Ruth I knew long before the Princeton Papers The great poet had a dark side Which may have made me more capable of understanding That sin could be a real thing and darkness Worth more in personal struggle than projection.

Of Eating Eagles

Linda Wheeler raised a good question at lunch. If Franklin had prevailed and the turkey Had become our national symbol Would they allow us to eat it?

Of Examined Scripts Refined

Soon it will not matter
All the illusions that were my days
When that which came from out the deep returns to clay
As we strive to live the scripts that we absorb
And discover all too often dynamic traitors to our deeper selves
Life a vastly more simple place with out our schemes
And God or time provides the energy that comes with other dreams
To help grant this world's night
A sliver of beauty's poetic light.

Of Ink And Men (2)

Not all inks are created equal Some will stay a quarter century course Like men, not all inks are created equal.

Of Kindness and Bricks

Some build the world with kindness
Some build with bricks
The first is rarely seen
The second seems to stick
Given the lure of human pride
The fear of death we carry
Life could be infinitely improved in this meet
If we found the bricks a little less sweet.

Of Love

Choose what you love wisely for it will tell The million tales of your life And grand quests are often disappointing The starting blocks being so unequally placed The great prize may not lie in the external race.

Our young one bounced into our bed Limited English in her sweet head Yet communicating with the heart We had enormous fun with a game of hats The object being to make the other laugh.

She wrote in Russian two nine zero two Home address numbers in English too And other things I can't keep score Only wishing there'd been time for more.

So in this tale of respite from the earthly race King, professor, parlimentarian, business prol, After expending all you have for that you never could have been Beyond mirage of self, love's loving water calls And in simple acts of purest love True refreshment lies.

Of Panic and Calm Resolve

There are moments
When we are caught
Like the children in the vines
Of the first Harry Potter movie.
Which makes me think that the fly
Caught by the superior spider's web
Might do better to see if the strands
Rather than pulled against in a reliance on force
Could be separated through calm resolve
Which seems almost always to grant
A greater blessing than panic's furious ways.

Of Popes and Saints

Mother Theresa and Gandhi will save us
John the XXIII we must respect
(The voice of Jesus being so far back
It has been muffled almost to a whisper.)
John Paul VI if we trust the press
Held great personal good in his love of structure.
Pius XII may have misread Hitler
His predecessor probably killed by Mussolini.
This thing of Peter's succession
Is no small complexity even for arm chair scholars.

Of Rockets and Worldview

When men walked on the moon
The world became more safe for rockets
Newton won.
The New York Times
Proclaimed the victory in caps
Equal to a President's resignation
Greater than the atom bomb or killing microbes or Presidents.

This thing of moon walk Ever travels with us. It is for youth to carry With brash certainty. Age becomes more careful.

We must ever struggle with the details and the concepts Carelessly built rockets can destroy. Zeitgeist also is good fuel It helps us understand the California Freeway or failing in business Or a thousand other Waterloo's.

Of Sons and Little Empires

Those who are held by little empires
Know the terror of security
Know that they must grow to more
Realize soon or late the king's vision is not their own,
A path unbidden calling them to its lure; success-failure-treachery
Which even comfort and security only forestalls.

Of Toasters And Open Flames

I do not like an open flame For in it there could be A fuse of vastly more loss Than aesthetic or even spiritual gain.

But flame for spirit is better
Than a world possessed of none
Imagine my sense of betrayal
When the toaster wanted fun
And in process headed towards burning the house down.

Of Young Husbands, Toilet Seats and Visual Learning

In our early marriage one constant issue was the toilet seat and its proper position of salute. This brings us to the issue of the audio or visual learner. Despite wife's frequent admonitions, I didn't get it. It was the seeing that was educational. Right conduct following right behind and Breaking the unseemly and unintended intransigence. Sometimes truth is in the seeing.

On a Plumed Motorcycle Rider

The kid with the red Roman centurion plume on his helmet Delights with the novelty of his whizzing by And makes me question what he knows Of the dangers posed by mixing loose gravel and speed, To imitate the scions of old empire is his need, I wonder if he knows more than an empire can also fall.

On a Senior Master Sergeant

Quietly she stands in line
Behind those of clearly lower rank
Her strips of seven noticeable against their three - four
Her face is taught she does not talk or smile
Carries a silent sadness about her
that takes my greeting with good accord
As she gathers food to bag and goes out the door
Captive pilgrim towards an eighth stripe more
Not even lunch allowed to break
The frightful pace of march.

On a Small Touch of Hunger

A small touch of hunger sometimes is good True hunger in truth never being good While flase hunger is something for which to watch Food being the great drug of our time With which we anesthetize much more than hunger Beware food as a drug which masks the deeper pain.

On an E-mail

The editor told me of 'God in Texas'
She felt it was incomplete
Perhaps she wanted a happy ending
I gave her what was in me
We did not have a conversation
about process theology and the
incompleteness of God,
We did not hear the tone of
each others voice or how long
I was kept on hold before being
granted entree by a secretary.

E-mail as blessing can also hold it curse.

On An Execution

We executed in Texas once A man whose life was hard If remembered correctly his words To the good Nun were hard His last words were hard.

The young captain who he killed Stealing his red sports car Pleaded for his life The captain coming to an undertanding Of true value in our bourgeois strife Pleaded for his life But this man required life and car Property was not enough He was hard.

I like this institution - execution - very little
But in this one case I will confess
And only from a reading of the press
That I am glad the killer's gone
If prison walls should fail to contain
A hatred for us all that was so great
That even pleading for your life
Was not an adequate pennance
For the powers of a red sports car.

On Anger's Barrel

As one raised rural
Guns were not necessarily a big deal
City boys have more entertainment options.
It is the field that sings the siren's song
Of hunt and death.
It is when anger is juxtaposed over a barrel
That this is not cool.

On Art and Function

Art is so far from function It seems almost vulgar That these two words Can share a same line.

On Being Retired

The surprise in being well retired Are the things that are no longer discretionary To help keep you on the planet: The pills, the exercise, the nutritional care That in 20s,30s,40s,50s, could sometimes be slacked But once through the big 50 Are on obligation If you want to stay.

On Care and Currency

What if the currency were care? French fries at McDonalds done, In the smallest quantity conceivable.

On Despair

Those who care must despair
A battle never to be won
If God truly sent his only son
Even he was not enough
When up against such brutal stuff
As the blood that fills our veins.
Best we work only for the smallest seed of hope,
For fear - despair will catch us - if we dare look back. .

On Epistemology

The mystery is this
We do not truly know
And even history's powers are but our best guess
Little lights flickering in a vast darkness
In which we can only hope
That we choose correctly
When we choose something like a star.

On Flushing And Other Acts of Proper Resolution

I think that few things could be Better than a gentle flushing society If when we made a mess Everyone said yes To the proper resolution.

On Inflation

Even the Germans could not withstand This terrible destroyer of economies Turned to evil Hitler whose ways they'd rue. It is well our Fed is concerned About this trickle of fire Down the side of our great economic rocket.

On Keeping Faith

How vast the world's despair Owned far past poet sensitivities Where the death of hope oft means death Or the living dead we all have met.

The lesson may be simply this Love each day as fully as you can Core requirements not withstanding And when error comes welcome the education And recite: 'I will learn, again.'

Pay attention to keep your zipper up
But not too great a caution for what other's think
And practice prayer or other
That helps connect to source
And when the world says:
'There you are.'
You know the greater truth,
And keep faith with the strangeness of your path.

On Naushon (Halcyon Poems)

Gentle, the sea wind's caress
Parting the pasture mists
A sheep processional
Light year fires in an ebony pool
Living current glowing towards the sea
Night upon Naushon.

On Paris Hilton

This Paris Hilton thing makes me sad So much of it comes from who's her dad I don't defend actions that we know are bad But grieve that the lives of the rest of us Have become so vacuous Watching this media circus has become a fad.

On Recalling a Poem

Poetry can wound and alienate
Its' truth does not always heal
Just as I would not be disorderly in public
So I would not use poetry poorly
When its shirt tail of emotions hang out too far
It is best to tuck them in
Acknowledge the failure
And press forward
Against the storm.

On Shoeing the American President

The fellow who threw the shoe Knew exactly what he would do I wonder if there will be a future pay off For having given his world so definitive a statement Of a supremely dark disdain.

Bush, it seems to me, was never known as an open man
This event could confirm the wisdom of that stand
Of a quarter back wise enough to almost always stay behind his line.
In youth I would have thought such an action fine
But time and growing a hair more wise
Has helped me understand the calculus of leaders and led a little more
The future is what will tell us what is in store
And sustain or deny the statement of a flying shoe.

On The Film 'Casualties Of War'

In the film there is a bad guy
Who kidnaps, rapes and kills a peasant girl
Justifies himself either before or after with the line:
'We aint all combat over here.'
I admire the chaplain who took an interest
Messy matter that it became even for a war.

On Torture

In the delirium of torture
Rommel's name was thrown and
His suicide was forced.
This general who had burned the Fuhrer's order
To kill the commandos sent to kill him
Was not much for murder
War itself holding sufficient blood.
His contempt was so great in death
The Nazi's closed his coffin
Threw the last great party of their Reich.
Hitler lost his best general that he needed badly.
We need to learn this history lesson also
As we loose much when we turn
A blind eye to this thing called torture.

On Wearing A Father's Slippers

I wear my father's slippers This stern man who built a school And taught of Depression deprivations with sparse words By the faithful folding of toilet paper.

His shoes are also now my own - worn on special occasions, And there is nothing ill his being still and put away in all this acquisition. In these matters one reality is ultimately clear; It is far better to try to fill your father's slippers Than to try to fill his shoes.

One Comic On Death

I believe it was Grady Nut who said - loosely quoted: 'You look back on the edge of death and say With a hearty laugh - I'm glad I did that.' At our exit I wonder if the best question may be Did we enjoy as much as possible the struggle of our stride across the stage?

One Life

first surgery Mom takes me from Dad great teachers Cold of Upstate New York hubris college - great teachers second surgery hubris and first poetry Army combat simulation range teaching corporate experience pneumonia Philadelphia Pendle Hill Sidhartha leaves the Shire inner city teaching sex a strange call First Chapbook of poetry Berkeley - seminary sex and lovers more great teachers the great professor the great cancer hospital corrective second lieutenant more hospital corrective Kind Corpus Christi dentist a silver dollar from G. Con Smith Dad dies industrial baker street kids drug dealer in the board room Desert Storm deployment to Oxford Germany and Europe friends with a big Mercedes preaching to a sea of faces politically incorrect iob assassination Home - back to the 433rd Airlift Wing (Air Force Reserve Command) marriage 433 years marriage Mom dies daughter from Russia metanoia lieutenant colonel retired PoemHunter.com thee cats, a rat and a mortgage poetry always poetry, the song that continues.

One Line Premise For A Theological Construction

The more history is carefully studied the greater the sense of sin that is discovered with an open mind.

One Morning's Abandonment

The cat does not obey her summons
The dog is not around
Kids stolen by the TV's magic
Wife at exercise - her new ground of being found
And I alone in bed
Amide haze of anticipated late morning riseing
Plan moves for the coming day
Abandoned.

One Postulate On The Poetic Order

The world is filled with poets
It is not totally the hope of being read
Or even some life beyond our graves
But rather the celebration that we have a voice
With which the reader joins in interest
And then to our eternal elation
For a moment we are not alone and sing.

One Question Limit

If your mind can only carry one question And survival circumstances allow May I nominate: 'Do you love me? ' If you have a one question limit.

One Secret Worth Eight Lines

Jean Cluett knew the great secret That we engrave on each other's hearts With words even casually spoken.

Clue told me of the first chapbook She did not believe it held any great poetry And probably was correct Very little in life being truly great

Especially, if your father founded Arrow shirts.

One Tortoise's Reflection in Retirement

In the twenty year race that Colin Powell entered Expecting to end with a lieutenant colonel's leaf You can not underestimate the benefit of being A wise and daily briefer of the President, Not all can have such singular good fortune.

Still I reflect on all those hares Who broke their main springs Unable to grasp the Secretary's wisdom Reaching for stars that turned to bars For at least one who I knew to be the best.

This thing of hierarchy is a necessary evil Where committees can not be convened to determine From which roof top fire is coming Battle is no place for democracy or consensus.

Cream may rise to the top or it may not
Position in a milk bottle
Can not gurantee the depth of butter fat;
The driver here not so much money
As pride - long held a deadly sin My spirit impoverished friends
Who will do anything to win
Would do better to flow towards
What was once the future Secretary's prize,
To release the dreadful drag of a fevered ambition.

Open Flame

I never leave an open flame
For flesh and fired candles do not mix
And legions of fire legends must hold a bitter truth
Never turn your back upon its charm
But always half observe with wary eye,
Sage advice to never leave an open flame.

Oswald Wanted to be Somebody

Oswald wanted to be somebody
There is a lesson in this for the rest of us
Who are miffed by Kipling's lines:
'If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And greet those two imposters just the same.'
It is in loving the process of our lives
That some treasure may wait at the end.

Our Day

We can only take our day
And hope in some small way
That we have had our say
And left the world a little better
Than before our stay.

Owned By House

When you buy your home
And the bank helps you
All the bank wants is there monthly check
But you must give the myriad minutes
To keep your castle as you want it
Remember it is an unyoked partnership
Poetry bearing its portion of the undeclared costs.

Paper and Ink - 1

It is strange that God should marry paper and ink
The two being so uniquely their own
One should have no use for the other
But combined by force of hand they marry quite nicely,
And in this more than a tale of reading is told.

Passage (1976 chapbook)

an-aluminum-bolt-winds-cyclones

seven lives share:

marina toys developments the Empire skyline's halo murk

beyond the scarred brown earth at 40,000 feet the Mother arcs

plateaus

plains,

white flux: mountains,

Carribean Lake autumn patchwork slate snow spires

Six hours of destiny made manifest.

Gentle he who lays a hand to her A woman not to be held in scorn.

Passing On The Things We Love

My father loved his building of his school Was pierced I didn't want the shiredom But with feeble tools went out to grow The things that grant a bliss Less of ecstacy than constant moment And in all of this learned a lesson There is no guarantee to pass on The things we love to another.

Pastoral Care by Internet

Pastoral care by internet
Is a very strange thing
Where I try to share
What survival of three wars,
Plus those who loved me greatly,
Have allowed me to glean.
Reality is not as it may seem.
This is true
And here it is
My gift to you.

Pastoral Epistemology

Because we believe the material life is good We test it and find this in it Quite often ignoring to our detriment The other plane called spirit.

A classic case of 'either-or' not untypical of European thought The challenge is to come to Asia's wisdom of 'both-and' And expand our possibilities.

Pencil Power

Mrs. Arnold, one comment please! In your insistence that we learn to write in ink During that frightful transition sometimes called middle school You could not know how severly the world would change Even after you were in your grave.

So while the enthronement of ink's nonfading virture Is nice and appropriate for history and many social things Your love could not know Viet Nam would be my war And pencil power would save me from it.

For though much maligned in my thinking which was yours
The humble pencil has two stellar virtues with all due respect to ink technology
The leaded line is faint but more than adequate to a day's survival
And even more important submits comfortably in change
To its eraser's power.

Pendle Hill Bio - 4

To this fair Hill has come the quest
To learn from whence the main spring comes
Of pulse and thrust of currents held within
And of many natures to discover that most true
The very essence to help see through
This conscious passage on a planet - TIME That God has entrusted to fragile hands.

Pendle Hill Haiku - 1

Blue snow Through green panes A rose thorn whispers.

Perhaps

Perhaps some day Creatures of another universe Will wonder at these words And find a spirit to their liking Amidst their judgement of the craft.

Perhaps The Greatest Question

The greatest question that takes so many years to come to is: What do YOU, infinite You, want me to do today?

Petitionary Prayer to a God Who Suffers With Us Upon Lighting a Candle in the Dark

If you hear my prayer
May your spirit go before them in the dark
And touch the darkness of my heart
With you light that grants to me the sight
To see the sites of worldly suffering
Courage to hope that there is more beyond and
Grace to help to heal upon this darkling plane.

Pictures From A TV Mass

At Saint Peters the Pope is tired in procession
His blessings abundant to the faithful
Angelic choirs of alto men and boys
The children of the world bring flowers
To lay before a child of ancient porcelain
While His Holiness speaks in a position from above.

This old altar boy can not change the channel Can barely understand one word and that from days of Latin Mass And finding at last the strength for competing channels Discovers instead the energy to turn the television off.

Pilate's Kingdom - 3

When I see the human pain
That is hidden in the lives of those I would love
I ask the fearful question
Why?
And discover two men face to face
One asking - 'What is truth?' too busy for reply,
The other pointing to it plainly.

Pilate's sin was in his hurry, Asking, but not waiting, not willing to hear. His sin is ours. It was his speed that killed our Lord. Functionaries are easily found to drive hate's nails. This time will never bind.

So, again we come to the cycle's end. Challenged to start a beginning of Humility resting in His Father.

Our pride will be the first casualty And our lives like His may lead to a cross, And probably will if we take this whole thing seriously -He doesn't promise us a good time. He never did.

I begin to understand Why those well intentioned nuns Could only give my youthful mind A fraction of this thing called - Truth.

Pill Poem

There is a tyranny to pills
That help keep a life intact Foremost are the pills to hold stomach acid's back
Then pills that help keep the mind on track,
Special pills for prostate, even pills for poluted air
My life and that of many others
A mess with out their fare of care.

Pill Splitter

Just because The Pharmacy has pill splitters for sale Does not mean that the pill you split Has half the medicine you need.

Pills

Pills to help the blood to flow Pills to keep a stomach's acid low Pills that on occasion can help to breathe Even pills to help throw post fifty seed And the pills of final fix Are the pills maintaining focus on this mix.

Pioneers

Pioneers always suffer
They are the ones who believe
but do not know.
The ones who tamed a land
The ones who sailed the sea
and air and outer space
The ones who explore the
mind's and society's dark caverns
The ones who have made
the divine more accessible
Scientists and medical folk with passion
to heal or interdict our scourges
I admire them all.

Plans

We function on two planes
That on which we plan, hope for, act on
The other that which happens
Ken Burns film 'The War'
Helped me see this sensed truth clearly
With a fellow from Mobile Alabama
Who thought he was safe from Hitler
Being stationed in the Philippines and
Found himself on the Bataan Death March.
As David Pohl of Boston so sagely said to me
At leave taking for Desert Storm
'This isn't what you planned for at all.'

Plastic

Am I the plastic in my pocket?
Bad picture - good - it doesn't seem to matter
To authorities that's who I am,
With all the rights and privileges attending there to
Including sales tax.

Plastic-Leather-Steel-Paper-Fabric-Ice

plastic, leather, steel, paper, fabric, ice, six word reduction of a life wonder at the amount of strife that in summation gives only the burp found here

Plug Horse?

Race horse, war horse, plug horse Plug horse? Yes, for those wo plug along.

Poem For Future Title

As one who took thirty years
To move from contemporary to classic Haiku
I have come to appreciate Jean Cluett's wisdom
That the first chapbook did not hold great poetry
It is ok to be small even almost invisible
This can be the gain of even an entire life well lived.

Poem From A Sabbath

Newton's gift was great As is mechanical power The struggle is in power's center To extricate self from this part Of a spinning wheel.

Poem Of Molten Title #2

We spend our lives driving through things Only to discover quite late that they are only things And the great value we attach to them Is far less than their actual worth.

Own your: watch, car, closed gate mansion, title Beware their auras and pawn shop values The thing my mother in the wisdom of her greatest years confirmed Still, they are only things.

Climb your mountain of achievement Discover that the climb is greater than the summit Life has the potential for the wise and humble to be a process And this - even a point called death - can not defeat.

Poem Of Molten Title #3

I wonder if our strugle is like my dog's Who occupying affection's center Snarls at thecat from fear of loss When love for both is adequate enough. I wonder how often my snarl is an unnecessary thing.

Poem Of Molten Title #4

I love the growing power of the day That manifests in color gray And holds within its brightening power A sky vault blue for all to see.

I love least those of great ambition Being one myself And knowing from good counsel The darkness of this side It is no wonder then I love them least Loveing that which is within me the same.

Poem of Molten Title #5

These lines are lost, no critic will help you find them But we were lovers
My soul too fractured to consumate the deal or
To understand the goodness that you offered.
So thank you for the sweet communion
To have loved once even incompletely
Is still a gain.

Poem of Molten Title #6

In that time when Revereware
Might have meant something to the public
The president of that company told this story:
During the great depression he owned a gas station
Business was not good
He washed the windshield of every car
Perhaps it was one block perhaps four
A lot of early morning windshields
On a gratuitous compass rose
His business turned successful.

Yesterday a call from 'Curves' A personal touch for sure An honorable formula for success. Some things just don't change Government can't solve it all.

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Poem of Pure Autobiography - An Adolescent's Syllogistic Reasoning

When a child I was lonely
Being fairly well locked in by adult influence
I noticed those with student office had friends
With position in student council I noticed
I was still lonely
Only much later learning about syllogistic reasoning
That allowed me to understand
That you have office because you have friends
Not that because you have office you have friends.

Poem Place Under Construction

There once was a poem here named Hubris Which for some reason to the poem hunter system wouldn't allow me to removeus So the space was renamed And the title quite changed My hat's off to you Ogden For helping this goofus.

Poet Fuel

Great droughts of silence are required To produce the poet's favored line Muse whispers and s/he listens - transcribes, refines Great drought of silence to write a line.

Poetic Prose Piece Prior To Haditha

The issue is not talk, nor even hanging the culprits, it is if our military can be an extension of community values so profoundly held they hold up even in situations of extremis. The child raised by a village has greater moral fortitude tha the child raised on M-TV, The second part of this problem is more obtuse. It is that the antidote to Lt. Calley is Admiral Stockdale.

Poetry

A little bit each day
In hope that it will stay
Shadow and light in place
Relying on a greater grace
To help stay this earthly race.

Poetry as Prayer

Poetry as prayer is given in a daily way In hope of insight bright Yet even more in hope of afterglow From the passage of the years Legacy being a far too heavy word.

The issue seems to be life's market Where time and money almost govern all Poetry seems to be the exception of this greater day That steadily takes nuns from us In visions of a richer plane.

We vote with time and ink and money For what we truly hold to be The vision of reality and sometimes God will grant a prayer We don't know how it works or where.

So given that each breath is gift That comes in daily power from afar I'll celebrate with ink and paper The sad madness of it all And publish feeble lines for free That celebrate God's majesty Beyond this darkling plane.

Poetry for a Therapist

The key is in the modulation The passion of our youth Does not leave with age It transmutes.

Our task is not so much to break the ego's lock -This is the mechanical thing that can be dangerous -But to find and integrate the wounds See the many blessings clearly - perhaps for the first time -And take a step forward towards becoming ever more whole.

Poets And Mariners

Poets...
As surely as sailed mariners of old
And perhaps when all the tales are told
The great question that remains that is a little bold
Is if we both managed to enjoy the strife.

Poets Are - One Line of Definition

Poets are the crickets chirping in life's night.

Poohee!

My daughter informs me My poetry is - Poohee! Take the name, Pooh Add a long e as in Lee Make it explode from your mouth A worthy addition to the slang lexicon of English. Poohee!

Poor Man's Haiku

Wind through bamboo Black marks can not grant you The beauty of a sound.

'Pop' My Rock

Dad, I hope you know How good you truly were Despite tri-decade war With a son who only very slowly understood.

The day I burned your timber reserve
And trembling went to tell you
To muted staff amusement
My fear did not anticipate your congratulations
That I had cleared that blasted dump!

I just wish you had come to hear me speak Languague always seems to have been my thing Charming Mary Pickford at four Only presaged words before the assembled But it was much easier to find me in the paper Than to come and listen to your son.

You built your school I earned degrees And far too late We found each other.

I went crazy at your death
Worked at baking bread armadas
Worked with kids off the street
The military was actually vacation
From the pain of losing you with out good by
For you never saw me speak
To a small ocean of the young
And do it well.

My fear is heaven won't be place
And I will go into that night
Crying with despair of your not being there
That we might continue to repair
The carnage that false pride worked
Between a father and a son who knew only how to speak.

Dad - shoes and a watch was not enough to give From a fairly humble kid Who didn't know that more than anything I just wanted your arms of love.

Pope Funeral

Of the great who came to see him off I wonder how many listened to his words That mitigate the drive of power that politics must be And mocks the better struggles of the holy sea If some semblance of this holy man's Last communication was received That even with all the world assembled The final utterance is a simple box.

Pop's Viet Nam Verve

My Dad was on life's whole a man of few words
But he had something running through his rough veins
That in grade school won a prize for poetic elocution
I found the prize of proof in the toy closet
And was surprised in youth.

We could not discuss Viet Nam as others did
It was reading Bernard Fall that helped me to see
But Dad had a surge of verve on this issue:
'We had no god damn business being there in the first place
And once we were there we didn't know how to get the hell out.'
An old War II vet's concise and poetic summary it seems to me
Of the nasty, fog filled and complicated war
That could well have killed his son.

Post Sunday Morning Poem

Reading widely and having once lived nationally I see the name of at least one prominent savant And far more than the admiral unknown With his gold braid in the private dining rom Think of things undone named in the Confession and Realize it is good I do not subscribe to the death of sin.

Poster

'Arise go forth and conquer.' - Tennyson
The poster said with young duckling pictured and quoting big T
I can still celebrate that spirit though old
But know that for duckling to grow to duck
Wise eyes must guide to keep brother hawk from lunch.

Power Phrase

It was Ray Godlewski who taught me the phrase 'The burden of an unlimited potential.'
Four decades later now living in cyber space I finally realize the truth of his phrase That was shared on earth so long ago And grieve the wreckage seen both in my life and in his From the worship of this idol.

Prayer Call

As night turns to gray dawn
I begin to see our lawn
That lawn, prosaic, bourgeois and a common sight
Is the green mask of beauty for deeper things we do not like
Where all would be lost if not for a candle's light
That calls our souls to prayer.

Prayer Factory

Our house at best a factory of prayer

1 dog,2 cats with which us humans share
the need for communion with The Other
The child in child like ways ecstatic of gain
My wife in her more quiet ways of steepled service
For me the swirls and eddies of it all
West having so much to gain from East
A 'Christ against culture' to use Herr Niehbur's phrase
Still, the spirit can make life sweet
In those moments when home becomes a manufactory of prayer.

Prayer Request

To distant Russia from familiar soil we go
To gather child who has already claimed our hearts
And have sufficient faith in prayer
While understanding modern doubt
To seek its power for journey mercies
And all that is to come beyond her native land.

(We are expected to depart on the 10th and return from Moscow on the 22nd at which time the building of this poetic blog will continue.)

Prayer To A Divine Heart

Still stands thine ancient sacrifice
But I fear we stand not near enough
To truly know reprive from anxious hurry-scurry days
Filled with such driving need for things and folk
That we forget to listen to our beat and have not woke
Either to the tune that sings
Within our hearts or yours.

Prayer to a Pillar of Fire

The television does not talk to me nor you I turn it off but You I can not turn off. You whisper to me in tones The world will not hear I listen I fear and I pray to you Great silent and expanding space of the Universe.

Prayer to an Unorthodox God

Candle light
Morn breaks night
Nature is
Dog, Cat, Child, Wife
Breath and life
Hope for spirit seeing strife.

Preamble For A Core Values Class Of Military Basics

You have not heard the stories Of the great war my father's generation fought.

You have not read the local news of valiant heroes Dead upon far foreign shores (my mother used to feed the father cookies, now he has The Medal to remind of flesh and blood that were his son.)

You do not know war's ordinary deaths, 'Foxy' was not a hero My memories are of track team bus rides and how quiet he was.

You can not know these things
It is not fair to ask you - but others do And so we meet: to share, to learn, to explore, to hallow that history
At whose center Honor is a verb
And Core Values our compass to find it in our times.

Preface (Gift/Intro) - 1

Perhaps this is my task in life To filter things that touch a soul And hold the strains till a pen can mold Feeling into form.

Preserving House

This house will stand when I am gone Quiet statement of another song Upon our little patch of blue-green in space With issues of roof, foundation and other matters of care That so many do not see or will not dare To help make sure this house will stand.

President Wanted A Poem That Is In Process Until The * At Its End Is Removed

Where is the intelligence that Can pierce the armor of issues So thick they travel to the third plane?

Where is the sacrificial soul so great It will never allow the madding crowd to lead Casually towards this terrible thing called war?

Where is character so strong
To resist the sweet lure of words
That tell what we yearn to hear
Rather than what we need to know? *

Presidential Betrayal - 7

The President knows a betrayer's kiss as piercing as Jesus knew But despite high office his wound is more, The measure of God in him being infinitely less, Lacking divinity's peculiar powers under duress.

Of this new news, at juncture, I have no need to know And God has worked a subtle magic in this sinner's soul Rendering a clown almost incapable of judgement.

So like Godiva's townsmen who blunted judgement by loving Something greater than the temptation of her sensual fare, I turn my back and grieve the part Where friendship has become so shallow - Just a little lump in the national pudding - Rendered this supposed friend incapable of capacity to swallow.

Presidential Prophecy - 'Addiction' Is A Word Of Too much Truth

America has it all Including a dependency on the individual's combustion engine That even in Bay Area Calfornia I seriously doubt can be broken.

Problematic Watch (Autobiography)

In the days of lieutenancy
Wearing a heavy watch of no great pedigree
My boss - a colonel, who was a kind man
Warned me that in some countries
I would do well not to wear my watch
The removal of a hand being
The only impediment for some
To pecuniary gain of its possession
Fortunately for all of this I was stationed in Germany
Where wearing a watch was not any sort of problem.

Productivity

A poem each day In hope it will stay When well I know That I can not.

Prohibition (**)

The bottled water is no more
Hurricane fears helped lay in a once goodly store
Now we like almost all the town are Aquifer dependent
It's good from foreign water that we are now free
And there will be no more of this fluffy stuff for fee
What comes out our tap with out fear of hurricane
Will have to prove good enough for me.

Projective Observation At Frequented Restaurant

Hooky from church
Sipping the best orange juice in big town #8
First Baptist on the television
The fast food worker of twenty walks past,
His body posture declares:
I am defeated only as the keeper of the register,
I survive here,
I survive
I
Only I.

Prose of the Power of Poetry - Decalogue of Pope John XXIII

1. 'Only for today, I will seek to live the livelong day positively without wishing to solve the problems of my life all at once.

2. Only for today, I will take the greatest care of my appearance: I will dress modestly; I will not raise my voice; I will not claim to improve or to discipline anyone execept myself.

3. Only for today, I will be happy in the certainty that I was created to be happy, not

only in the other world but also in this one.

4. Only for today, I will devote 10 minutes of my time to some good reading, remembering that just as food is necessary to the life of the body, so good reading is necessary to the life of the soul.

6. Only for today, I will do one good deed and not tell anyone about it.

- 7. Only for today, I will do at least one thing I do not like doing; and if my feelings are hurt, I will make sure that no one notices.
- 8. Only for today, I will make a plan for myself: I may not follow it to the letter, but I will make it. And I will be on guard against two evils: hastiness and indecision.

9. Only for today, I will firmly believe, despite appearances, that the good Providence

of God cares for me as no one else who exists in this world

10. Only for today, I will have no fears. In particular, I will not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful and to believe in goodness. Indeed, for 12 hours, I can certainly do what might cause me consternation were I to believe I had to do it all my life.'

With thanks to Walter Hanss for flagging this from the writings of the theologian Ron Rolheiser.

Prose of Walt Whitman in Support of the Poemhunter Vision

'Through the divinity of themselves shall the kosmos and the new breed of poets be interpreters of men and women and of all events and things. They shall find their inspiration in real objects to-day, symptoms of the past and future. They shall arise in America and be responded to from the remainder of the earth.' Walt Whitman

Question From Adolescent Years

At fourteen it must have been strange
To have a crush on the pretty red head
English teacher who was twenty eight and bright
And quoted Walter Minow's verdict on television,
Pronouncing it: 'cultural waste land.'
The words struck deep for one then addicted to the tube.
And realizing Mrs. Greene's great truth
Immediately converted to print from Cathode Ray.

Four decades plus four the question comes Was it more the terrible power of adolescent hormones Than nascent intellect that drove so rapid a conversion In a world that moved so slow but sure?

Question On A Presidency

Early in the morning I close my journal Outside the police oficer writes his report The glow inside his squad car Tells me exactly what is happening. Observing from the comoft of the house I feel safe and grateful for his presence And offer a cold drink which he declines. I wonder is this the thing Plus the inflation plus the hostages That made Governor Reagan a President?

Question?

How do porcupines make love? VERY carefully. Best if we were all porcupines.

Quote Poem from the Life of Gandhi

The mother brought the son to Gandhi:
'Tell him to stop eating sugar.'
'Come back in two weeks, ' was the Mahatma's reply.
She came back and Gandhi said:
'Stop eating sugar.'
'Why couldn't you say that two weeks ago? '
'I had to stop eating sugar.'
A case study in integrity.

Ray Godlewski's Case

Ray served as a sergeant When my big break finally came I served as a captain. We were friends in undergraduate days Ray gave the paper when I ran for student council We shared with Rick the upstairs of a house Located just off the campus edge. He gave me the second case in his Cadillac days before the great divorce. It was a friendship kept through teaching, the insurance years, seminary, work with street kids. My loves at least were three. After Desert Storm orders came for Europe but Ray could no longer play. He had to break the chord between us. I still use the case he gave me and am gray Think fairly often of him for a quarter century gap and Wonder why with Europe he could no longer play.

Reading Fairy Tales

Reading fairy tales to daughter
Has helped remind me in a friendly way
Of the world's complexities and that pride
Of which I am most culpable
Is the greatest sin
And that love that does not seek to fill a hole in self
Does indeed give warmth and light
In a dark and cold world
Redeeming far more
Than even the best artist's imagination can conjure.

Recipe For A Dessert On An Occasion Of Visitating Angels

Here is guidance for much work That, if correctly transcribed, leads to A heavenly desert for chocolate lovers.

Bake a 9 inch pie shell. Beat 2 eggs whites with half tsp. vinegar, quarter tsp. salt and quarter teaspoon cinnamon. Add half cup sugar gradually, beating until it forms stiff peaks. Spread on bottom and sides of baked pie shell. Bake at 325 degrees for 15 to 18 minutes until ightly browned. Cool.

Filling: To 1 cup of melted chocolate bits, add 2 slightly beaten egg yolks and quarter cup water. Spread 3 Tbsp. of this mixture over cooled meringue. Put remainder aside. Combine quarter cup sugar, quarter teaspoon cinnamon and1 cup whipping cream, beat until thick. Spread half of this over chocolate in pie shell. Combine remaining whipped cream with the chocolate mixture. Spread over whipped cream in pie shell. Chill at least 4 hours.

Recipe For An Advanced Ale Lover

Charmay is nice
But, oh! the price.
A fine ale when in Belgium.
In the States we must make due and ask:
Did brewing in Abita Springs survive The Storm?
Their brand called 'Turbo Dog' is very nice
And a fraction of the other's price.

Red

My mother was a red
The Great Elizabeth was one too,
Observing our young kitten
Engage her older friend with claws - when she has none Makes me wonder,
If there is more to red than color.

Reflection of a Marauding Priest Without Faculties

The friend who spoke of mission
Was not the one who placed the candles
At the foot of the cross where the work was done
But it was others less priviledged or less fortunate
who did the real work
Lacking both the vocabulary and circumstances of escape.

Reflection on Age and Preparedness in Celebrating 500 Successful Submissions to Poemhunter.com

As five hundered comes
I realize a little better who I am.
By some in days past seen as mad man,
My insurance year's capers were particularly bold
This seems so long ago and now I'm old.
I thank God I've bee given these years to live
Yet still try to be prepared if the other fellow's
Only means of communicating is with a shiv.

Reflection On An Ancient Book Of Elizabeth Barrett Browning

To me her greater works are a source of comfort
There being so much there that strikes as pale
Her great love poem to John standing as a singular monument
It gives vastly lessor lights the hope
That there may come a day
To strike the spark of poet fire.

Reflection on an Archive

In the attic of the gym Snooping in my youth was not a sin I found there a fund raising program From the Great City in a time beyond my own -Frankling Delano Roosevelt Honorary Chairman.

Mother was an archivist Wife worked at that too Surely my pack rat ways must count For some thing as a clue To show how the past Will always act as prologue.

Reflection on Painting a Church

The day has come and stolen by Cat sleeps peacefully by my side Riveted to couch by bright light I will soon join bride in bed.

Paint brush to church a common sight Bespeaks the failure that is our plight The able bodied who are not here.

Can prayer save Mary a noble question? Yes, Lord - I believe! Help thou my unbelief.

Reflection On Sir And Saint Thomas More

Reflection On Sir And Saint Thomas More In Appreciation Of A Bevy Of Fine More Scholars

Once upon a time
I believe it was at the Met
Hobein's Cromwell and More
Were staring across at each other
Through at least that eternity.

More was the martyr
Though it took the church 500 years to fess up
Cromwell carried Henry's axe
And twenty years back from 2006
The tour guide was nonplussed at my desire
To visit an unmarked English traitor's grave.

Why such a sense of strangeness?
When despite a continuing conspiracy of silence
muffled by unrepentent or unknowing bureaucracy
The location of this loyal servant's body is at least known
When his far greater master's grave is lost.

Post poem acknowledgement: The fine Moore scholars are: Cathryn Beck, Dody Donnelly, and Dan Hanlon, S.J.

Reflection on Three Robert Frost Poem Dates

If 1912 is the date he burned his boats
Then three poem dates I find of interest
1915 - The Road Not Taken
1920 - Fire and Ice
1923 - Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening
My understanding \$200 his income from his first
twenty years of writing
Makes me feel ok I'll never earn a penny.

Refraction Off An Interview With Nicolas Sarkozy on the Charlie Rose Show

If I listened carefully and discern correctly The ghost of Ronald Reagan as President Is alive and well in France With good chance of becoming her next President.

Refraction Off An Interview With Wendy Whelan (Charlie Rose Show)

Madame, in Moscow we saw
The Bolshoi perform Giselle.
But Charley's cut of your work
Helped me to understand your husband's comment
That on stage and armed you are not
Back stage or even breakfast companion.

Proportion has been a gift Compared to the beauty of your movement's grace That defies this small thing called gravity And makes this pen salute both your vision and your power.

*Wendy Whelan is the principal dancer of the New York City Ballet.

Refraction Off Charlie Rose Pandemic Interviews

Looking down the barrel of this dark gun
The experts careful not to be alarmist
But agreed we must prepare for that which will come
Not as spectator sport
Perhaps a decade of preperation grace
Perhaps vastly less
The strike of iron through a sea of hearts
It does not matter when this evil comes
It comes and
We must strengthn our levees
To have any hope of dignity
With which to greet it.

Refraction Off Kenneth Patchen's: 'The Deer and the Snake' as an Angry Sunday Stone

In my church I am one of the quiet radicals.
One of the three guys who helps make the food run
So the senior women can feed the poor No medal there, the poor distract us from our true theologies:
The things that distract from death, or wealth or power
Or countless images on countless screens
I can not count the ways.

Or how about trying to convince
Little old ladies to wear T shirts
To tell the world about our little patch of church?
Or being so strange to think
That that divorcee/teacher
Who loves the church as well as its children
Who serves my family and its family well
Who lives on the edge of financial oblivion
Might just be Jesus
Patching up our crumbling walls.

Only our Lord's body died Faith has it even his spirit Occasionally can be found alive and well -Sometimes, even in a church.

Refraction Off The Interview Of John Hope Franklin (Charlie Rose Show)

John Hope Franklin the prophecy to which you call us
Is the one I fear we fail to hear
And like this poet's muted voice anchored in a sense of history
Can only wonder here about the power of things
That rob the commonweal of so much good,
Our great private wealth may count for little with out your greater sphere

Remagen Bridge

It is the image that incites the need to travel Why else would a nonexistent bridge impel a visit? And a thousand other places Anticipated with the mind of history Whose sight is but a fraction of their experience.

Remembering Uncle Don in a Stream of Consciousnessr

The day Uncle Don played host to Eleanor Roosevelt was a good day The day Uncle Don realized all his achievements - vanity - a bad day Between these two extremes we all live. This does not negate other wisdom available to us Nor ease the bite of death's approach Gandhi tells us we must be the change we would see in the world.

Reminder to a Frenetic Self

I am not: my watch, or car or title
Daughter, wife or memories of friends lost
Not the numbers on my bank account
Or friend of an appointee of the President who would receive my call
Not my house or hope for future plans
Lines of poetry that so smoothly come
Nor sacred om connecting to eternal sea
But one speck of universe who lives in Thee.

Return from Beaver Hollow

The return was good but not perfect
These words for those who will someday bury me
It is ok this thing of visiting snow country
And the scene of murders never quite forgotten
Even the cemetary that holds my parents
Was a scene of white peace
From which I could laugh at past ambitions and follies
But the campus now gone to neon proclamation
The place did not hold closure though little changed
It was cat and dog, house sitter and sister
Who helped close the wound just enough
That I could tell the doctor where it hurt.

Revelation

Study in Washington, D.C. Helped me to see Not everything in government Is as it casually appears to be.

Reverie on Yellow Paper

If the great and intricate machine of government fails
The the great land of buy-buiy-buy will be no more
The pawns are in the stores
Backed by knights and bishops
The castle rules the street
A quenn here a king there
A blind poet writing to a friend
With hope that at least God
Will understand these lines
That he does not.

Richard Serra Thank You

Richard Serra thank you
For two nights with you on Charlie Rose
Tonight I will sleep better for this TV
Because I think you helped me see
The quest is to strive but also it's ok just to be
Truth requires neither that I buy or sell
And just may be the worthy thing that endures.

Right Off The Vat

The voice at the other end of the drive through coaches me How to satisfy my addiction For fresh french fries that are supremely hot You say: 'Right off the vat.' This was education superior to the observation of fast food labors. The greater surprise came at the window When asked: Would you like salt? For the first time in fifty years of fries I had an option in that nanosecond of confusion That blessed an old life with this young man's question And my opportunity for a fledgling no.

Rilke's Dictum

These marks of meaning
Must strike to paper as I breathe
When there are no fresh lines here
You know I'm gone
Or the other death has claimed me.

Robert Bellah's Wisdom

The prophet lead us truly that day
And helped us see with painful clarity
That Homer and Socrates were far from dead,
That to be the center of the universe serves no one well,
A centered pot belly asking hard questions
A far better thing to be.
Plato burned his plays because of him.

It was the only time I ever saw
A class stand and applaud.
We knew we had a model
To help understand a vast malaise
If we could find the courage
To face the hemlock lingering in our own cups.

Roughed Up in Berkeley

I have only been assaulted once
My life's not through it may come again
It is an experience not to be sought.
He was an artist I was a student
Japanese this artist with all their fabled intensity
I stole a minute perhaps no more than three
In his restricted parking lot before he reached me
Was roughed up a little
The cops were wisely dismissive
And I wisely never tried to steal
Another three minutes from his parking lot.

Salute To A Corpus Christi Doctor - Gordon Conwell Smith, M.D. Deceased

Corpus Christi - no switching station - a quiet town Was an opposite leap from the Berkley years, And the good doctor known there had a reputation In the professional association as the only physican Who would treat the poor. The phrase was: 'has an interest in.'

Someplace I suspect I have the silver dollar he gave me With solid guidance about always having money Which he had but had the wisdom not to worship.

A follower of Baghwan Raijneesh
His care for those of lessor furtune
Make suspect christian colleagues
In the stained glass encampments
That live just slightly beyond the country club.
This all helps 'corpus christi' to be a nice alliteration
For the host of us not reading latin
And long gone from the wonder
Of a warm breeze sailing town.

Salute To George Catlett Marshall On The Charlie Rose Show

The general wore two stars in that high hierarchy of four 'Who was our greatest General? ' 'General Marshall......'
Nice to see a salute to the man unknown by so many Whose picture lives in my study and more in my need for a hero.

Salvation's Other Face

In early morning's fog there names appear
The souls too wise to love a lessor God than love
Who passing that great energy to me
Saved me from frightful fires of eternity
Not a far off Hell but on this planet here
And redeemed a soul in present time
Just as Jesus did, who was also kind.

Savants

I listen to the savants on Charlie Rose Am grateful for those who would dissent These worlds that spurn Acknowledgement of sin as real. So often and sadly the things that truly make us run Are our need to put hamburg on the table.

Scat Cat

The kitten does not understand
The shards of glass are not for kitten paws
And reprimand for oft sought food.
So we too are often guided by a higher power
That steers us from the desired corner
That would only cut our feet.

Schweitzer's Glasses

In that time before the clock turned 2,000 Albert Schweitzer was known as saint and surgeon and savant. Yousuf Karsh, no small name himself, would photograph him But not without the great man's instruction That he be allowed the vanity to first remove his glasses.

In this tale of greats
There is a lesson for us lesser lights
In the ways vanity runs so extremely deep
That just this realization can grant a prize
Where no Nobel will ever wait.

Sea World 4th Of July*

This 4th the French may not be popular
This nation that helped to sanctify the 4th
Yet our crowd feels their influence
In sound and sight spectacular
Where even sea creatures do the bidding to delight.

If those rough hewn men could see their seed With two centuries plus of growth They too would respond with even greater shock and awe Than we of television times.

Seven Gifts From Our New Poet Laureate

Sir, it is not just your love of fine old trees Or sharing the deep shards of truth's light Your honesty about fear of money's power for instance Your willingness to give your life away A relationship of fifteen years that culminates in classic love It is your assertion that poetry is not dead, And the comfort that neither are you.

Shooting Pistol In Water

The post todler gleefully proclaimed:
'I shot my pistol in the water.'
So much for why Presidents and so many others Prefer their private pools.

Sick in Moscow

How strange to be so sick in Moscow That even the call of Czarist treasures And the great icon hall was stilled.

Sighting from Distant Age

Perhaps it is the primal currents we pass on My father's rage at my youthful antic of wageing war upon the stray cat Now more mildly surfaces with daughter's lack of care for pet. Dad understood the little guy's battle for survival be it man or creature.

More loved by others than loved by son At last I understand that memorial window Given for him that lives beyond his death.

Silence

Reading the poet Sandra Fowler
The phone is quiet
Daughter and wife sleep
Clack of the keyboard
Tick of mantle clock
The power of silence
In a noisy world
Sometimes will break through
Sometimes receives its due.

Silence As Elixir

Wife and daughter do not love my late night ways When silence draws me as a magnet From the day's harried lanes And house with them securely in it Helps also shield from terrors That often prove too great a force in solitude And kill the strikes of black ink Upon their white paper victim.

Silence Is Ok

Here I am most real
The world can not understand
The silence from which lines grow
The silence from which Christ drew
And Mother Theresa too
Many will some day come to understand
That silence is ok
A blessing worthy of its count and cost.

Simple Line

A thousand things surge through my mind And emerge in print as this simple line.

Simple Pleasures

Simple pleasures for me are these: A well balanced pen with smooth flowing ink, Eighty pound paper, smooth finished, black line spaced (no anemic blue), full length tri and multi punched, Hot dogs at 'Betty and Roy's, ' Fresh squeezed orange juice at 'Cha Cho's, ' Cold beer at night after a too full day, A headline that brings good news, A sermon that grants a laugh, A three hour lap swim knowing you can push yet more, The outside pool you do not have to clean to use, Daughter's kiss unbidden - wife taking hand, Learning Nietzsche is pronounced Neetcha, Learning of the steel of Nelson Mandela's self discipline for good, Our flag full furled by constant breeze, Bargain at a garage sale, Morning coffee and early morning bird song, Black leather shoes shined to a mirror finish, Watching cat plays, Reading early Frost, Publishing these lines.

Simple Pleasures II

Warm wind to your back Puppies at play Cat on her back Broccoli with ranch dressing Cookies and milk Laptops clicking in the living room.

Simple Truth

When things go wrong We can not seem to grasp The simple truth that what we love Is what will endure.

Sin Is

Sin is out of fashion perhaps out of even more than I have simple words to name:

Honest introspection revealing much Society not schooled in ways of silence and meditatiion,

Wilson sailing to Europe Leaving key Senate leadership behind To fester and take his precious treaty from him,

O-rings that killed our astronauts - Nobody investigated pandering to journalists.

Sin is real even if we do not like it
From a macro view - not being a betting man I will bet on its power every day,
The greatest tragedy being
It is only a Hitler who seems able to share it
Most of us bearing its isolation and other pains quite alone.

Sin's Fan Club

Why is it that our greatest men Can not illude this thing called sin It seems as I come to understand Sin should have far more fans.

We put it in a corner dark
Ignore it till its power is stark
Far better would it be
For light to shine upon it's wretched form
And from dark form to shadow all would see.

Six Obsessions

The first obsession was a toy rifle The second a.22 Jeanie Uhl and Chess in fifth grade Mother with her death approaching And a secret catolog of women Achievement Six bricks sans mortar In the wall of a life.

Six Shadows And Hope

We would do well to meet our shadow The side we give so little publicity, The side from which the media run like dogs Yet revel in like wolves tearing at a carcass.

We would do well to own our darkness A Black, An Indian, A Jew, A Criminal, A King, A Messiah For others to use to focus as targets for our rage If we could only meet our darkness and have help to embrace it There might be basis for hope of something That was once called progress.

Sleeping Beauties

Wife to left and child to right Walt, there's more to this phrase Than your cinematic sight.

Slow Morning In Poetville

On a slow morning in Poetville You may have the facing page Of Poemhunter for all of forty minutes. Well, almost a three factor isn't bad.

Small Blessings

A cup of OJ to start the day Wife, child, cat to help A pill or two that helps grow old Money to pay the bill Moment of silence to recollect These small blessings more than a few.

Small Hand In Mine

This little hand that touches mine Has brought me to a world greater than a legion's ears And freedom more than 40,000 feet that grants the vision of the Mother's arc, 'What are you doing?' she asks Pointing to this long furtive affair with words.

I wish our men of steel Could taste this nectar of a child's love But too often their great power to observe Blocks the embrace of experience For if they could feel Then powers' cruel propensities Might prove a little less.

Sneakers and Squirrels - 1

There is a well kept secret: Those who run in sneakers Don't frighten the squirrels.

Snow Cathedral (Halcyon) - 1

Slowly comes the glowing morn With her softly falling snow Giving proof our world to know Mantled trees in virgin white More, than the common sight Of forest at the meadow's edge.

I've seen the snow on Christmas day Swiftly fill the silent wood Turns the bows to vaulted ceiling Build a snow cathedral where none stood. Make a great cathedral of the wood.

Social Security

Before the doors open at 9: 00 Before the security guard tells you Your calls must be made outside The line is waiting.

Sitting in the great waiting room I am 'Blue 3.'
It will determine when I am seen.
The representative is pleasant, he is young, he is not officious. I feel welcome.
Still, even at its best, suddenly you realize you are a body. You realize you are more frail than you ever thought you would be. The postponement that proved a blessing.

Socialist Underwear

The mostly whites and occasional tans
Of some exotic and far away mass production plan
Carried the great benefit in those years of less
Of helping to keep me out of financial stress.

A world of plaids and single colors bright I did not know
As God helped direct my little show Through things as strange as cancer wards And work with children of destitution's child.

If underwear had been priority
I think my parents would have helped,
To correct the plight
Of this non-aesthetic sight
But I lacked the wisdom alas to ask
And there were greater things for which to strive.

Now the years have brought a more aesthetic state
Than that built on whites and tans
In no small measure luck and trust and love
Have worked their strange chemistry
That presently makes socialist white much less of a necessity.

Socks

Aunt Ruth started my relationship with socks Socks to keep me warm in cold Socks to shield from desert heat Socks to run a better mile Socks to withstand the stress of combat All starting with the softest wool of love To awaken a finicky and spoiled youth To the power of socks.

Something Worked - 4

I can not tell you how but something worked Like Norman Mailer with his cancer and Marx Brothers movies Inducing laughter in the face of cancerous death and winning I can not tell you how but something worked.

Our guide whose grandfather Stalin murdered Told us it went extremely well (I know nothing of Russian judicial practice - The judge struck as one who took great care - For me the process took forever) My wife took the point of the judge's questions And I emotionally followed.

Safe in Marriott Moscow A good rate negotiated by our guide To stem the dollar hemorrhage Steadied by strong European coffee She whispers and I transcribe.

Yelena is not free
But the mud soaked streets of a distant peasant village
No longer claim the future of her life.
I say this with respect of the people who stopped
More than any other Hitler's madness
And lived with Stalin's savageries.
There will be deep wounds for her to give to God to heal
Or whatever is her greater power than self.
And my prayer is that an alphabet
Will not hinder her return to her heritage land
Perhaps she can help carry the water
To our mutually parched understandings.

Mother would be pleased with our vote Who invested profoundly in the number two. And as I said at start, something worked. If you gave a thought or prayer to help A humble thank you for this, for something worked.

Spiritual Seduction

Grateful as I am to all for all the help it took to get it Certainly for most by the time you strike the six hundred sixty sixth point of its seduction, And depending on the poverty of your soul far more early I fear for some, The terrible thing about being called 'Colonel' is you start to believe it.

Spring Ahead

A formula for day light savings
That seemed to help
(with a nudge from Uncle Sam)
Was at four the afternoon before
To set the watch at five
And mentally subtract,
Which works well enough
For production of early morning poetry.

This thing of thinking forward Holds great difficulty for us In matters far more heavy Than the management of time.

And in moments of deeper pondering I wonder if our common weal wandering Might prove less if we all could Set that compass on our wrist Ahead an hour or even two BEFORE the alarm clock rings.

Stages

In youth: I lead, I want, I will, I can Adulthood: I follow, I hope, I may be able Age: I live, Perhaps, Us.

Stalin's Rolex

Berlin was Stalin's Rolex Its price was 352,000 Russian casualties He bought it and never counted the cost. The symbols of the great are many A Peace Prize, a capital, a market, an election, a car The central thrusts of our broken humanity.

Stance

In the early morning with bare light to function Upon the manicured grass I spread my legs in careful stance And in one full swoop of expertise Retrieve the dog's poop in an act That does wonders for the maintenance of neighborly relations.

Start Up*

With wife gone and morning's gray turned light
I love the time before the energy of passion comes
When a black chimney can burn into blueing sky
The time before the second cup of coffee
The time before checking the weather on the web
or the New York Times or research that seems to take so much
The time when siren wails are the exception
When cat draws near and dog will think about it.

The time before public dressing, When street lights cast dog leash and hooded jilaba And a vastly over size corgi, into the moving shadow of: 'Death Walking His Dog' - a photograph yet to print.

Steroids And Malaise

This thing of steroids
Is harold of the deeper evil
That declares we must always be number one
Negates the great struggle to have fun
And for mirage of temporary gain
Destroys youths and adults the same
And in bitter paradox
Can draw those who try to quit it cold
To a dark world forever old
Where no sun shines.

Steve Stalonas Remembered

In the stable with plenty to eat The restlessness that denies sleep is shared with a picture that Given forty minutes of mid day laps, Makes no sense except for the old Quaker's wisdom, That God's ways grind exceedingly fine. That the picture of the slightly bald chaplain In the pool with the handsome black lad Was taken before the lad became a Master Sergeant (Which is not an insignificant rank given the world of media generals) Was taken before Al Qaeda was a house hold word Was taken when they - AQ - were doing their home work. It's amazing what you can learn if you live and if you take the time to talk To the Pakistani security guards guarding the compound The vehicle having contained explosive but not carrying explosive This time before another time called Khobar Towers or OPM-SANG. And if you remember the words of a professional pacifist Who would go to prison rather than wear a uniform Who haunts me with his wisdom after Nixon and Clinton That God's ways grind slow but exceedingly fine. God's ways grind slow but exceedingly fine.

Still, Small Voice of Calm

Our primordial selves twist skeins That Twain and Tolstoy have clearly shown to us That even together we are not so pretty.

Why then the bankruptcy of the Holy? When astronauts tell of celestial conversions This seeing of things from afar may be a secret To unlock a greater power than rocket engines We have come to trust.

This small voice that whispers in the dark Comfort of martyrs and guide of saints That greater deep from which Jesus drew - A subtle thing - that split his era into two, A subtle thing this still small voice of calm.

Strong Fathers

While typing would have been nice
Calculus was the order of the day.
When summer drew a call for more of friendship's tie
The structure of 'Y' Camp was the discipline that would stay.
For such small things work great to kill the boy
But how, or even if, they build the man If this is the bottom line I am not so sure and even in my farther years
Still do not understand.
For joy seems to lead on to joy and pain to pain
When we make of life the competition
from which our father's came,
I fear a great portion of our souls are lost and What is far worse - there is a great deal that is not gained.

Suburban Halcyon

Soft air to caress
An orb peels gray
Hedge greens that radiate
Stone mirrors light
Not bee or bug bite
Suburban halcyon.

Suffrage At Poem Hunter

The world must have the right to vote A reader's exclamation taught me this with his note So vote as default I will now allow Or change back to correct the error of my ways.

The world it seems has need to judge
My living in it has come to see this as so much fudge
And Rilke, from his letters, I believe would find this suspect.
But despite my poverty I want to offer a small tithe here
To pay a debt owed towards healing of this sphere.

So hindrance of a reader's right to vote Will be corrected at my next stroke And reader judgements that have been read before Spiritual homework will be attempted so they do not canker like a sore My task in focus is only to write and give them more.

Super Bowl Reprise

My friend who watched the game told me
It was the half second differential that turned the tide
A lesson worthy for all who must compete.
Not only are our destinies shaped
By the fractions of our points
But even time's fractions must be honored
If domination - or even simply survival - is your goal.

Tale of a Once Upon a Time Christmas Gift for Me from the Deity

God has a sense of humor and If you have time I have a tale. In military basic training land The youngsters - not always young - always come to chapel. It is the only place where they are free Loosed temporarily from the fetters of their captivity It is a place of pressure and of pain This military basic training lane Access to the military the goal to be gained. The process lasts about twelve weeks Twelve being the number choosen by our greatest teacher.

On Christmas Eve with help from wife
Her intent being to help ease my preaching strife
A great sermon was spoken to the uniformed throng
Their attentiveness told me absolutely nothing was wrong
A great sermon preached to a sea of faces
A little less pain in one of God's strange places.

But the best was yet to be For God's sense of humor held a gift for me That in that night of greatest pastoral power A goal of rich adolescent vision had come to flower. The goal was to preach in a great filled cathedral And to do it with an excellence almost sudoral To do it so well that half would return To do it so well only half Christ would spurn, At least as far as his worship would go The ethical part is still very much in tow.

So God may or may not have a plan
But I suspect She chuckles when She observes man
And although cold stone the structure was not
A legion it could comfortably hold
The half of which were almost down right told
By circumstances beyond their personal control
That to chapel next week they would return
If only for encouragement their first strip to earn.

This is a genunine gift God gave to me
The purpose I think to help me see
That though youthful ambition errs by aiming high
The calculus of our lives belong to the Big Guy.

Note on the use of 'She' to refer to God. It was Oswald Chambers' 'My Utmost for His Highest' that educated me to this in the scriptural sense.

Tamped Spirit

As one who always believed
That the power was in words
It's a little dampening when you realize
John Winthrop's wood pile
Had infinitely more power
Especially when it was being stolen.

teeter-totter

A torn up lawn's a little thing Especially whose greens I do not own For private lawns may dwell in peace Where urgent trucks make equal quest.

But given human nature and its ways I doubt without some touch beyond (to unbalance finite difference) The thing will ever work at all To allow the necessary balance For those who'd like to play.

Television Survival Drama

We all know about 'Survivor' and the other reality shows. Ken Burns and his crew gave us another one, A sort of ultimate reality show Whose prize was the survival of World War II.

Testimony - One Day Late

To those that once proclaimed God's death I will give you my testimony That God will get your attention Even if it takes a Texas sized hurricane Even a thing infintely less tangible Even believing you are prepared for death itself Is not an adequate defence To deny His claim.

Thank You Note

If you said a prayer
Or even tossed a thought of blessing
Out our way while we were gone
To Russia to retrieve the child we had
So quickly grown to love, thank you.
This modern world that thinks it knows so much
In truth knows very little
And even peasant movements
Carry subtleties almost incapable of understanding.
So... - thank you.

Thank You to Theodore White

Theodore
I know not where you dwell today
But suspect these words betray
Your death was not your end
Your having the wisdom and kindness to send
Something of yourself beyond your time
I lacked full appreciation of your gift sublime
So full then of youth and lust and passions less tamed
In my years of descending trajectory
At last I have the wisdom
To celebrate and to salute your fame.

The \$ Rules The World

The dollar rules the world
This I have suspected from a youth
Though with age have had it painfully confirmed
And out of guardedness to touch reality
Am always sure to check its trail.
The problem with the dollar being not with a dollar
But with a noun that also has its plural.

The 800 Pound Gorilla Question in Education

In exploring a little of the worlds of Gibbon and Freeman last night I think Al Evans (my old civics teacher) would be pleased to know His only so-so student had persevered And helped to write a little history At Camp Rissington before it came to San Antonio.

My great teachers ignited a hunger
Far more than force feeding me to pass New York's tests.
The first issue in educational process
Is far more than asking good teachers to split their vision
Between a manditory standard and what they truly want to teach.
In looking at the calculus of education we frequently ignore
The eight hundred pound gorilla question in education:
Does the student want to learn?

The Amendment Of One Comic On Our Deaths

I believe it was Grady Nutt who said - loosely quoted: 'You look back on the edge of death and say With a hearty laugh - I'm glad I did that.' At my exit I wonder if the best question could be Did I enjoy as much as possible The struggle of my stride across the stage?

The Cat's Chiropractor

Yes, with your claws you have my attention.
Mew!
Where does it hurt?
Mew! Mew!
Two scruffs behind each ear under the gland area and a long back bone stroke.
Is that better?
Mew! Mew! Mew!
Please pay the dog at the door, thank you.
Mew! Mew! Mew! Mew!

The Chaplain's Retirement Doggerel

I am grateful the world has noticed me a little And wish I could have given more Despite back being a little sore The true struggle is not what we strive to take But the struggle over what we strive to give.

The Chief's Learning Curve

If my source is correct Napoleon said:
'Even the private can carry the baton of the marshall in his pack'
He understood the Chief's learning curve
That sometimes that young warrior
Can find a better way to cure the pemmican
Ike also understood this principle
And listened when a sergeant found a way to save his tanks.

The Classic Formula of Cecil Rhoades

Rhoades was not a nice guy But he understood great basics Even if your empire is only in words We need to understand the basics If we want to build.

The Color Of Grief Is Moist

Fatigue, deep pain in her voice Negotiation of the details The death, cost of services, acknowledgement of griefs Moist eyes of the first meeting Moist eyes of the funeral service The strange sheen of moisture that claims a face.

After the struggle to clebrate and bury
The woman of majestic jaw in the box
Deformed hands so deftly covered.
After the struggle to get the morning garbage out
But before first coffee
Before the pills I need to function
It strikes me in the twilight of sleep
How beautifu she is

This woman of broken voice and spirit. Moist with the wake of one loved and taken Moist with how final it all can be.

The Curse of Poetry

To carry the fire of poetry in your veins is curse Because the freedom to say 'no' is lost You write because you have no other choice Hope that God will read a word or two Or some other respected or unknown entity on the web, and that you will be very lucky, If strangers bless you with a kind word in your cup.

The Danger of Free Poetry

The danger of free poetry
Is the lie that it is free.
For it certainly is not free to those who write it
And there is a well established market factor
Consumer's tend to cherish
Only that for which they pay.

The Death Of Happy Birthday

I would never have guessed its' death A friend mentioning the demise at dinner Suddenly the inane sounds in restaurants Make great sense with blinders off And as is almost always the case Registers are involved to a not so happy jingle.

The Devil's Thousandth Head

The devil has a 1000 heads I can not grieve al-Zarqawi's dead But know enough of evil's human ways And its transitions to know that his spirit will still stay, Though minus one the devil has a 1000 heads.

The Disconnect Of Evil

If I am publicly praised by men of weight Yet fail to fill the cat's water dish Or have it filled by another Isn't this evils' terrible disconnect?

The Edge of Theology

A: God invented the things I like. B: Do you like green beans? A: Yes, but only in cans.

The Ever Expanding Column Of Honored Names

Dave Fox, Pinkus Aylee, Roy Benavidez, Robert E. Lee, Daisy Millett, Pappy Millett, Linda Brockington, Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Smith, David A. Martin, Dr. Fae M. Adams, Sir Thomas More, Jack Basil, Donald T. Urquhart, Catherine Beck, Allan James Saywell, 'Pop' Grace, Thomas Helm, Sphen Loman, Dell Lewis, Danny Loman, Alfred Evans, Edgar Steele, Natalie, Connie, Joan Sample, Ariel, Nina Teppedino, Keith Jenkins, Jeff Lange, Walter Hanns, Dean Winter, Mary Jane Uttech, Charles Uttech, Bob Kimball, David Carter, Laurie Paulson, Ken and Pat Simpson, Paul Martineau, George Van Cleff, Holland McSwain, Ken Lane, Dr. Craig Guthrie, Kristin Duncan, Bob Dalton, Walter Hanss, Betty Noble, Robert C. Leslie, Paula Leslie, Joe Campbell, Dr. Nikita Zakaravich Asseyev, Parker Palmer, Charlie Rose, Sandra Fowler.

The Formations Of One Who Must Write

THE NEW YORK YEARS

Reared on the campus farm or farm campus of the historic George Junior Republic outside Freeville, New York - Theodore Roosevelt once described the place as 'a manufactory of citizens.'

Studied in Washington, D.C. under the auspices of the State University of New York. B.A. awarded from SUNY Geneseo. Most papers were researched during vacations out of the Cornell University stacks. David A. Martin Economics Chairman was a great influence.

The Empire State Military Academy outside West Point and Tompkins Cortland

Community College would also touch post bacalaureate development.

THE CALIFORNIA YEARS

Awarded a Master of Divinity from Thomas Starr King at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. Completed work on a Masters in Pastoral Counseling primarily through residency at one of the teaching hospitals of the University of California Medical School at Davis. Robert C. Leslie, the great student of Victor Frankl, was my primary influence along with many other wise and wonderful teachers.

THE TEXAS YEARS Under construction

The Fortune Cookies' Fate

When carrying a fortune cookie With high hopes to take it from A to Z or A to B If you do not want it crushed Remember to plan for a stiff box.

The Future Theolog's First Blink from Sleep

It was an English publication - 1932, In the States a rough equivalent of 'Better Homes and Gardens' But there was one strange twist as It sang of one glorious enough to be: 'The savior of Western Christain civilization against the Bolshevik menace.' Adolf Hitler Not a bad introduction to the world of sin.

The Gain of an Entire Life Lived

As one who took thirty years
To move from contemporary to classic Haiku
I have come to appreciate Jean Cluett's wisdom
That the first chapbook did not hold great poetry.
It is ok to be small even almost invisible
This can be the gain of even an entire life lived.

The Garbage Man's Back

Carefully labeling 'heavy load' on the flourescent orange paper tag Rain came and with it ruin For consideration of the garbage man's back.

The God Whisperers

We have the horse whisperer, We have the dog whisperer, But what about the God whisperers? The legion of legions who listen When a small voice gently lures: Here, take this as my new direction.

The Great God Pill

Oh great god pill How youth in my psyche yet resents your power To send this not so ancient frame to hell If so foolish not to remember the consequence Of going AWOL from your pills.

The Great Ones

The Great Ones eventually discover that they are not At death's door the calculus of their lives change My bleoved Uncle beyond blood taught me this In history I read of others For myself in quiet and gracious moments realize only love Can truly play the triumphant center No matter how many once cheered in the Platz.

The Greatest Question

The greatest question that takes so many years to come to is: What do YOU, infinite You, want me to do today?

The Gulf

With wife not with me
Strong willed and beautiful
Having known me as customer a long time
Intamacy enough to earn a playful scorn
We both paused and took each other in - if only for a moment
Looked across that vast gulf of age, income, education,
Our shade of skin
And realized the gulf that divided us was vastly more
Than a counter at McDonalds.

The Hallowing Of History

History teaches that we are not so great That our moment rests on frail things The darkness of the present being well hid It is the past that truly gives us light And helps us understand with deeper sight The contemporary things that touch our days Enough to make a cynic religious Or better yet call one to balance In The Middle Way.

The Institution of Toast

The institution of toast
Is not well understood
It being a common thing
In a world obsessed with novelty.
Like the divine we would do well to make
The periphery of its acquaintance
When properly tamed by toaster
A pleasant thing for dog and man alike
A bread worthy of its begging.

The Journal

It does not not lie
It tells with a sigh
Not where you are
Or where you want to be
But where you were and when
According to Katherine Lee Bates
A line a day is enough to keep from sin.

The Kindness of Class Mates

I remember the class mates
Who did not make fun
Of a natural target
Who had yet to learn
The art of camouflage
The art of blending into the herd.

Bill Crowe did not make fun nor did he encourage those who would slay a peer for the entertainment of seeing invisible blood flow. Pete Waldron and a student senate helped me win.

My forgotten undergraduate professor said
The adult version of this well
Reflecting on days in the big time he commented:
'There are those who would kill you
Just to keep their claws sharp.'
It is something I remember to this day.

The Monsignor's Wisdom

He quoted at least once an Enlish play write - I think it may have been Paul Harris 'That people are not against you they are for themselves' He shared that one year he sent over 300 Christmas cards Every one was glad to have a piece of him.

In his apartment he kept a multi frame photograph A navy pilot who missed his carrier and crashed Only the 'Mr.' in its caption is remembered.

Joe never traded too much on this monsignor thing But he was proud of the honor and understood it Proud of full colonel in the Navy Reserve But he was still disturbed in later years of success He didn't make the active duty cut.

I wonder if the photograph of the young pilot's plane is any clue?

The Morning After Moscow

Loving friends to greet you And send you into early morning revelry Familiarity of things from milk to chocolate And the greetings of the dog and cats In ways a Grande Salon Does not accomodate.

But of all the things that struck In coming back The most surpiring thing Concerned a hat.

A hat far too heavy for South Texas wear Though a wonder for the snows of Moscow Where not a lick of notice did it once receive But - 15 is not 54 Though shock of travel did not call its name.

The Most Serious Question

The most cowardly thing was not in uniform but years before When loveing Sandy Nieman and not understanding that I loved her I asked her to marry me without putting weight on the fearful question Much as the injured might put their weight on a crutch to spare a foot I guarded feelings and used jest as crutch For fear she would say yes or no or perhaps maybe To the most serious question of my life.

The Mug

The mug contains a pen
And each pen in it a story
A story of acquisition, value, maintenance,
memories, surface things recalled and things
As buried and ancient as where the gold came from
Through which rust now peaks.
This celebrating mug
Now plays quiver
To vectors of a soul.

The 'Naw' in Poetry

Sometimes when the muse hispers Even in a place as free as this You have to admit the idea is not a good one and 'No' becomes a holy word.

The Need

The need is for silence and healing Not achievement and glory The need is met through scripture and meditation on it Fellowship of such depth that love is present.

The New Orthopraxy

In the new orthodoxy
God is not dead but ideas are endangered.
Stuff is what it's all about.
Salvation does not lie in things
This is the contemporary heresy and
Only a few are concerned.

The Newspaper Girl's Success

Our newspaper delivery folk have come and gone But mostly gone so I have taken note of one Who seems to stay.

Late this morning
She sweeps into our street
Driving against what would be
The normal flow of traffic
With papers for every subscribing drive way.

Exiting she does not see
The dog, the stop sign or me.
Beyond one day's manic concentration
She is a south paw success story
That tells - in part - the secret of a greater success.

The Old Chaplain's Hair Policy

Retired, I will never grow long hair It is the least that I can do To show those who wear the uniform That there are ties that bind Beyond hierarchhy or position Or the fate of those who fall There are ties that bind That keep one spirit ever in your line.

Written in part in response to the rumor of a very high ranking officer who supposedly has grown a pony tail in retirement, which is entirely his right in law but a violation of the mores of the military institution.

The Old Robe

The forty year robe needs to be relined
An unexpected - unceremonius - gift of a mother's love
Today a three bill item not easily understood in youth
Mom bought it from Evon for the price of materials
(Evon's husband finding it of excessive warmth)
My mother knew well her sons cold blooded way
That could use a robe of triple warmth but could not stay
What was to proved destiny's sure migration South to warmer days
Beyond the warmth of nurturing nest and a mother's love
not even death could hold.

The Poet In Market Culture*

As most of the poets basically give for free She-he's never taken seriously But let some poet succeed with the buck You'd think they had acted egregiously.

POET NOTE: The star at the end of the title will be removed when this poem is complete which at this time it is not.

The Poetry Game

There are moments when the well goes dry And despite the firerce pumps that I will try No water comes - it is a shame But perhaps it's all part Of the poetry game.

The Power of a God Called 'BUY'

Still, I tremble before the power Of a God called - 'Buy! ' And wonder at my terror These very many years The many things that seperate from silence If silence be the channel To where God dwells I can not tell But still I tremble when I buy.

The Power of Being Where You Want To Be

Phils last name will come to me someday
Gay and late in knowing it
He was vice president of a bank
When he discovered
He was not where he wanted to be.
A checker at a grocery store
Folks would stand in line and wait to
clear his stand when others were wide open,
Because this is the power
Of being where you want to be.

The Preacher

The preacher celebrates Lincoln's great strength
The camera pans to a beautiful black woman
Not very much engaged nor I.
The same instinct I had of Nixon before Watergate,
Something is not right.
This preacher has powerful words
But he could not keep his day care center open
It did not turn a prophet.

The Race

If I don't beat the blood pressure thing The blood pressure thing is going to beat me.

The Sadness Of Justice

I was prepared to give my life
To insure his regime would not grow stronger
A tyrant of the first magnitude
Who loved nothing that I love
It was sad to learn his death
Was an occasion for circus and baiting
The prisoner more powerful than those who killed him.
This scene so far from the vision of law
For which so many have hoped and sacrificed
and sometimes even prayed.
I fear.
I fear, when seeds of evil are sown.

The Saga of Robert Gates

He came to Charlie's table When Charlie came to his predecssor's office. Forty years of service to eight Presidents, If this data is correct I have not checked, The Press has discovered Bob Gates.

Mr. Gates wisely understands the press 'worm can turn.'
AlThough I find 'the power of the press' a more apt phrase
As I too join the Bob Gates craze
But perhaps out of a different motivation than those
Who must file stories to please editors and ultimately readers.

This is an instinct call out here in cyberland A peasant looking at The Grand I swear I saw pain in Gates manicured frame Though just beneath the surface as appropriate for a holder of great office.

The question was why there was so much attention all of a sudden. The unspoken answer is that he has always been the same It is we who have changed and after forty years see A wise man to help guide us through turbulent waters. I sip my coffee from the cup with the Great Seal It is worth a little more this morning.

The Second String Poet's Poet Hall Of Fame

E Barrett Browning - 'How Do I Love Thee? 'Bill Grace

The Seed of a Good Thought

John XXIII wisely suggested to us
That we spend ten minutes a day with a good book
If a Pope can find the time
To search for the seed of a good thought
It seems reasonable to me
To suspend my drives towards little pope
To follow his example at least for ten minutes a day.

The Siege - A First Memory of Robert C. Leslie

His book's title on the subject sounded right The letter written in the East To the professor living in the West 'Permission of instructor required' Even the siege of his office had failed The good professor was popular The class was full There was a long waiting list It was not the first time I had been licked.

So graciously withdrawing from my siege Signed up for something a little less That still kept me in the great man's light Second day of class a little shoulder tap '... I want you to be in my class...' Thus began true tutelage of the professor Who would claim me more than any other.

Now I am old and he is gone Yet I, still strangely driven to make song This strange thing that brought me to him There is something to our fate, The world I fear may mock, But I believe and trust and will not debate.

The Sink

The sink will not wash the dishes in it So I must.

The Stars Give Course to Blood and Bone

The stars give course to blood and bone Which in our nature we think is home Yet in this science there is more For despite our suffering we are not alone.

The cross for post moderns a place of ancient gore Can not compete with almost any store That God exists or cares to many almost a certain folly Our vision all prescribed by our wanting more.

I wish that I could claim I'm free Nor held by a sense of history With so much in it that is grizzly It is no wonder that I fear No wonder that I tremble At news I read.

The Storm Bed Three

In the good orphonage far from her present land She slept in the great room with eleven others And was protected by soup far more than the hamburg Which is her present delight.

After the storm of the day where she learned again
That she can have much but can not have it all
Came the storm of nature's night
With terror adequate for a child of nine
My wife granting sanctuary in our bed.
In morning daughter informs I was snoring
But I only remember small cold feet upon my skin
And foggy gratitude to what ever that force in the Universe may be
That this of all evenings was not a night for sleeping in the buff.

The Tale Of The Yoplait Skunk

It came, it saw, the container it thought it conquered Held so fast that two days captive in it found no release All the King's horses and all the King's men Were before this quiet tragedy helpless to help.

This skunk who destroyed my day
And in the course of close heroics
Fortunately or by God's grace did not spray
Was last seen by neutral observer
Tapping out the distance by head towards another part of town.

From the trauma of this drama I have sincerely resolved No more half finished yougurt cups Will ever again in outgoing trash be allowed.

The Thing We Can Not Get Around

The great truth I find in Christianity
Is that nothing moves with out sacrifice
Jesus calls me to his cross
A call I do not want to hear.
The gospel of John Wayne is much more attractive
That true grit will over come adversity
Rather than reliance upon a G-d we can not see
Whose silence we know is deafening even for great saints.
The thing we can not get around
Is that almost nothing truly moves
With out the sweet scent of sacrifice.

The Tide of Battle

At Midway the tide of battle
Changed very fast - two to three minutes If I am correctly informed.
A torpedo squadron sacrificed itself
To the attention of the gunners
Which allowed the dive bombers
To decisively strike.
Forget the Ides of March.
It is the tide of battle
Where you need to watch.

The Tiger's Grief

We who grieve understand you better Tiger Woods
The loss of your father
Death that cuts in two while leaving whole.
I admire the peace the press tells you have
And after the final shot the tears that broke
That told the whole world how much you missed him
How much you loved him
And that you are whole
Champion or not you are whole.

The True Tale of Mr. Peaches the Rat

The docent who put the madigascar cockroaches Through the washer and dryer that lived Gave us sage advice when to girbel or not to girbel Was the question of the day. The rat he informed made a vastly better pet.

So the cute little mousie type became the rat And joined the corporation of corgy and company with all of its accompanyment of three cats.

The docent's analysis was true A critter presence I do not rue Which is quite a confession from the farm boy Who once found them such fun to shoot.

The magic here is not alone Disneys No love for its tail have I But the truth is this unthinkable's a pet With a personality that can be a pest I will let your imagination do the rest The rascal will probably be with us Until the day that he dies.

The Wink's The Evil Thing

The wink is the evil thing
A predator upon those who do not know,
By those who do.
It allows us to pretend that we are clean
When we are not Gives sin its bad name when deserving of respect,
And mocks the sacrifice of far too many
Who never had the chance of its greater vision.

The Wonder of Your Eyes

A love poem striking Between deepest sleep And seeing off daughter and wife For the normal commerce of the day Interrupts the safe conventions Demands fear and the severity Of a Puritan self governance.

I can not help wondering
Was it God or Devil then
That arranged our chance meeting
There being no communication between our worlds?
Having seen you more than once before
Your eyes at last were seen
With wonder force electric enough to almost
Rouse old bones from deepest sleep
To celebrate that time.

The World's Way for Dogs

It is late and I am tired
Marks on this piece of paper
Celebrate that the dog is upstairs
That he probably does not want a midnight walk
But this does not matter
Even if I love the dog
I can not let him win
He must pee before we let him truly rest,
It is the world's way for dogs.

Theological Pre`cis In Upstate NewYork

Those years of serving Mass have cast their spell
Better than Father Tom could ever have hoped
Who ever would guess a life time rebel becoming orthodox?
So sadly but with a bit of wisdom
I understand Jim Whyte's position:
'Our hope is not here.'
And must say 'Amen'
To the sage of Whyte's Garage of Freeville, New York
While marveling again
At where God has raised us up a prophet.

There is a Call - 3

There is a call Deeper than the flesh that holds us captive There is a call.

There is a loyalty Deeper than the bounds of time and place There is a loyalty.

There is amidst the fear of missing life A deeper life than poet pens can glean There is a deeper life.

There is a sin More than all the words Our best minds muster to name There is a sin.

There is a freedom Challenged by those great powers That tell us that we must buy and buy There is a freedom.

There is a love
Which Christ brings to us
More powerful than the atom's flash
That disciplined in ways of faith
Can warm a sullen world - grant HOPE Where Spring's horizon can but barely beckon.

There is His call of love.

Things Mundane That Hold The More

My life consists of things mundane
As that which holds the more:
Evening's obligatory walk of dog
Cat laying siege for treat
Toast before retiring
Time and space traveled before flat screens
Thoughts of old class mates forever lost
Family loves and loved
The deep night quiet of the house
Night lights
Night
A poem's final period.

This Church in Syber Space

This bully pulpit in syber space
By State of California standards is not a church place
Yet I would certainly hope to celebrate the Christ
Defending againt ether a left or right wing theological heist
In this world of change even the center must change
To accomodate the strange new
That seems only not to threaten the spiritual few.

This Is Where I Preach

Beloved of the land This is where I preach If you seek to hear me You must come here.

This Thing Of Little Boxes

On a morning when poetry whispers to me
The world does not automatically
Grant a blessing toward success
The new pen wanting testing
Demands a screw driver for release from box
And being released, though never used, rewards me
with a broken clip for thanks.
The screw driver box surrenders its piece
But protests with spewing anarchy.
On a morning when poetry whispers
This thing of little boxes can be a drag for me.

Those Who Have No Name

Those who have no name Can in heart's memory be inscribed The issue is not even a name Than the center from which all else came.

Thought Deliberately Hidden In This Blog To Be Eventually Retitled - Coffee's Competition - After My Friend's Death

One Sunday morning's first revealation Was not from the good pastor at our church But simply the realization I'd rather write poetry than drink coffee And rather drink coffee than hear her preach.

Three Cats

Three cats
Each one a history
#1 tamed off the street
Dog catcher denied.

#2 acquired through a neighbor A grief replacement For the number one's companion Lost to owl power.

#3 a shop cat once We loved her window antics with our daughter Granted asylum when the flower shop closed.

A history of three cats.

Three Gods Best Avoided

Power, pleasure and fame are three Gods best avoided Power for leading only to its own corruption And denial of death where power ends.

Pleasure for its involution upon the self Where freedom lies in finding others The self a false center.

Fame for ephemeral lure To those deprived of love's true nourishing milk Easily forgetting that ax murderers Have fame to no avail.

Power, pleasure and fame are three Gods best avoided.

Three Hands Raised As If In Prayer*

I am grateful for a daughter.

Mama being sick you insist on company as a condition of sleep. My hand the center of a prayer sandwhich Before making a good escape. Sacred trust, I am glad you did not come to me in youth. Youth has too much passion and too little wisdom with which to guide it.

Even in sunset children are good Children and a darkness not to be envied are good.

Three Lights

If you can witness
The coming of bright morn's light
Do so and celebrate your great good fortune,
But, remember the humble candle when enclosed by darkness
For the issue in our lives is frequently hope
Which often can feed on very little and live
So a humble flickering flame can remind us
That we are not alone - at least long enough to hope.

Three Line Meditation

I take waiting as a holy time The world thinks the waits all on its dime Which kicks God out or some other greater thing.

Three Police Reports

Having three police reports in the historical record My insurance company being pleased with other's paying When my father had none It seems to me the issue is not who is at fault But the simple reality that a bump is a bump And a crash of any magnitude is best avoided By the severe vigilance of defensive driving.

Time - Age - Wisdom

The great sin is in knowing
The young being easy experts at this task
Holy doubt, unknowing and even mystery call
But these are functions of time, age and wisdom.

Title

The terrible thing about being addressed as 'Colonel' Or any other thing of hierarchy Is that about the number 1,000 You start to believe it.

To A Consistent Reader

If I am fortunate enough to have you
The statistics do not tell me who you are
So we are safe from vanity's or the world's intrusion
Publicly written but in a private spirit
Much as old lovers might be addressed in this space
If I had the good fortune to know that they were reading
To make an apology for sins previous to The Great Decision.

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To A Spider - 1

I don't want to hurt you little guy It's just on me you can not ride.

To Do List Anti-toxin

This I am sure of
Finding very little that is sure
What we aim at we will mostly hit
Though God contains the precision of the bullet's flight
We end in destinations we can not imagine.
Put good things on your 'to do' list
Trust the pain to God's keeping
Of the things you can not list.

To John Ashbery

We are grateful to you
Those who you will never touch
That you are controversial
That you love blank verse
That you confirm that there is space in the universe
For those of us who do not conform and are not pretty.

To See America Work

To see America work
Is an energizing thing
A woman from Alaska
As a back up for her king.

A man of color Reaching for the ring The beauty of multiple dimensions Making hearts of many sing.

Yes, to see America work Is a glorious thing.

To the Impoverished a Jesus Almost Always with Head of Thorns

The radio tells of rice price inflation
Rice price sounds nice
But belies the suffering of Filipino poor - others
And all systems that move with the underlying question:
What's in it for me?
That only a Christ crowned with thorns could even hope to answer.

Tools Of Faith

Tools of faith are three Prayer, worship and community From these three come service With all the rest the synergy of history.

Tourbillon Personality

Develope your self
It will serve you well
Loose fit for battle
Tight fit if you ever get to court
Develope yourself but always remember
All the parts must work together.

Towards A More Comfortable Reading Of The Poetry At This Site*

A star (*) after a poem title means that although it has been made available to a greater readership here at Poemhunter there is some instinct that makes me regard it as not complete. It is the signal that there is something in it that troubles my perfectionistic spirit. The most exteme example of this was the poem 'Passage' that took seven years to title.

My Mother's friend - Jean Cluett - told me at the time of the first chap-book, that was published in 1976, that she did not believe it contained any great poetry. A (1976) after the title of a poem is to tip you off that it comes from 'The Halcyon Poems' which was my first offering of four-teen poems - and for the most part - a kind one to the perspective reader.

Poems with (996) after them are flat out religious poetry or reflect a sort of noetic theistic faith. They were gathered together in the 1996 chapbook 'Snippets of His Glory While I Wait.'

The less stars the closer I come to trying to fullfil our current poet laureates dictum: * means that the use of obtuse or abstract symbols is kept to an absolute minimum or does not exist at all in a piece of poetry. The result is that understanding a poem is less difficult than those which have greater, for lack of a better word, density. Hopefully a poem at this level can be, if not quickly read, at least quickly understood. There is great poetry which is simply not easy to understand. Despite quite a bit of undergraduate research on Yates' 'Second Coming' it does not strike me as a poem that is easy to understand.

A ***** rateing means a poem with my wondering what I ever was thinking about when I wrote it or being aware of having taken off on some terribly abstruse piece of information or history.

In 1976 an extremely modest chapbook of fourteen poems was published under the title: 'The Halcyon Poems.' It was succeeded in 1996 by the chapbook: 'Snippets of His Glory While I Wait.' The latter was published consisting almost exclusively of pulpit shared poetry. Both of these chapbooks have for the most part been succeeded by the content of this site.

This site is presently, for the most part, an exclusive voice in the universe of poetry.

There are great problems in trying to create a taxonomy or system of guidance for reading what is published here. For instance, how would we classify Frost's 'Fire and Ice'? A great poem but one quite resistant of classification.

On the evening this was written I did not believe the creation of a taxonomy was an appropriate goal for a poet. October 5,2005 BG However, Maria Rainer Rilke in his 'Letters to a Young Poet' makes an interesting statement about the process of creating poetry. In the W.W. Norton translation he says the poet writes because the poet has to write. This is simply my situation. The problem this creates is that the greater cause of poetry is injured. The solution to this tension is to be honest. When the abstruse muse comes, own it and attempt to warn the reader. There is so much good work in the world why ask anyone to invest in a nonuser friendly poem.

- (1) s Are poetry intended primarily to delight, entertain, and reframe the world through a poetic lens. This is the primary level of the work presented here at 'Poem Hunter' and is an attempt celebrate the basic decency that exists upon the planet. If I have attempted to say 'thank you' by telling you about this site please check me out at the 1 level first. This is my attempt to make a gift to the world. The 1 level is held at fifteen poems, all of a relatively brief nature, and influenced to a great extent by the work of Ogden Nash and Robert Frost.
- (2) s Are closely are closely related to 1 style poems but carry a hidden prophetic dimension with which the reader may or may not be comfortable. Truth in advertising. 'Sneakers and Squirrels' is perhaps the best example of this offered here.
- (3) s Are pulpit poetry that are by and large Christocentric or arrive at that position. They are celebrations of spirituality and faith. Almost all of the contents of the 1996 chapbook: 'Snippets of His Glory While I Wait' are from this source and in this category. Also, there are some indications that this is poetry that is most meaningful to those who are in a period of suffering.
- (4) s God haunted but not necessarily poetry of the church. This is poetry of noetic spirituality. The use of the word noetic is informed by Robert C. Leslie's book 'Jesus and Logotherapy.' Leslie was a great student of Victor Frankl and Frankl's papers are at Pacific School of Religion because of their friendship. It is from 'J&L' that I understand Frankl's definition of noetic as 'the spiritual but not necessarily the religious.'
- (5) s Poems of hearth and home. For example the celebration of hearing the grandfather clock working in the early morning silence of the house. Domestic also in the sense that history and greater things can be sensed. When the poetry from 'Poems from European Soil' are recovered this is their anticipated classification. The prophetic and historical sensitivity are a more obvious presence than in category 2 poems and hence less acessible and of less interest to the general public.
- (6) s Poetry which is probably the least accessible because it draws upon historical understanding that it is almost unfair to expect the reader to possess. It is often an attempt at communication of subtle or complex issues.
- (7) s Are poems written in response to national events or out of a national or patriotic energy.
- (8) s Flat out biographic poetry inspired by the men and women who have touched my life over the years who I feel a need to remember if not blatantly celebrate.
- (9) s Future category.
- (10) s Unsure of how to categorize at time of posting. It has taken as long as seven years to title a poem. This process of trying to estab-lish a taxonomy is probably just as complicated and presumptive.

The word 'Halcyon' after a poem indicates its publication in 1976 when I published an

extremely humble chapbook titled 'The Halcyon Poems' It consisted of fourteen poems each representative of a day during the winter solstice.

The word 'Snippets' after a poem indicates its publication in the 1996 chapbook 'Snippets of His Glory While I Wait.' To a great extent this was all original poetry that was used to help discharge preaching responsibilities over the preceding ten years.

An * after a title indicates it is a poem with an expectation of continued growth or my simply not being at peace with what has been created. The poem 'Street Kids' is an example with a last line that troubles me and is in need of some form of unexplainable completion.

All of these classifications are very arbitrary but I hope they will make this site at least a little more accessible to the reader in the spirit of gift that is intended. If you feel strongly about the mis-classification of a poem feel free to write me at: quietpoettype@yahoo.com and your feedback will be seriously considered.

Tracking the Storm

Early morning lightning
Has power I will not dismiss
Counting the storm's movement by its strikes
Three miles, five then seven
Seeing the slight flash
Then carefullly counting the seconds
At twenty the lowest rumble,
For what seems a gray dawn eternity
Tracking the storm
From behind heavy closed curtains.

Traffic

The waitress is very nice 'Traffic is very slow today - I'm going home early - I've passed you to Theresa Who will take care of you.' Traffic with out a car.

Training Accident

I grieve a young soldier I never met
From a valley where I rarely go
All known of him is from a newspaper
That helped paint the color into the familiar lines.
Anne was correct in her prophecy from student days
That it woud destroy me if I had to see them die.

I came to love them enough though From just learning their stories. To almost freely destroy a career, It required what was probably over identification.

God in great mercy killed the career So I did not have to see them die The death of the career was depression enough From what many surely regarded As only a training accident.

Trash - Red And White

Trash red and white
Red for recycle
White the martyr's color
For that which truly has no use
Red and white colors distinct enough
A color blind trash man
Could distinguish enough to do his job
Red and white always better than red and black.

Tribute - Fae M. Adams, M.D. - 8

Once they dug me out of hideing She was my ultimate boss. The first woman doctor to hold A regular commission in the Army, I asked once if she had treated Any of the World War II Greats. A gracious commander she answered: 'No, but I treated their wives.' The quote best remembered Had a living fire from that era. 'I knew some tremendous men.' Her words simple and direct. The tone told of suffering at which I could only guess And willing sacrifice. I asked no further questions of the good Colonel. As I proceeded to help pay off The very bad purchase of Viet Nam On the installment plan.

Tribute To A Great Anthologist

Louis Untermeyer you have lead me Through poetry's labyrinth Shared the lines of Chidiock Tichborne From Mother's ancient book And so by form of printed education Though dead you live and give Enough to receive this salute From one you have well served.

Tribute to Martin Luther King

Syndrome is a good word
It helps to keep us safe
Amidst the things that swirl around us
To look for the pattern
To know where to move.
I am so grateful that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Only knew this word in his head.

Tribute To The Artist Bob Nally

In moments of great solitude I remember him
From that world where almost everyone was at their very best
Generosity - yes - and talent too
You could taste the salt spray from his oils
His name and life ache in a heart where age has come and
At last I better understand what it means to be an artist
In a world where so many do not paint with oils.

Trip Gear

Heavy underwear that makes Nautica earn their name Aunt Ruth's old socks from adolescent years Eleanor's belt celebrating a 6th grade vcitory Laurie's gift of Fairbanks nudge in shirt that actually fits.

Heavy oiled leather of high ancle shoes That can save from shoveled snow From when there was income of position Far more than job,

With care and time past Things can form a travel outfit Adequate to new day.

Truant (***)

Check book and sword and telephone Today my poetry is action!

Tub Scrub Love - 1

Mother Theresa's wisdom
Is always worth a second look:
'We can do no great things.
Only small things with great love.'

TV Cognoscente

Charley Rose I like you
TV cognoscente
And enjoy your public struggles
With the dark sides of the force
And hope someday you will discover
This thing of which Menninger has lamented as passing from us,
An ancient thing, very unpopular to the world's present mechanics SIN.

Twenty Days To Christmas In 2005 A.D.

Across the green manicured lawns
With white light deer
Through the thermal glass
Past the heavy brocade Santa
(another ever elegant product of China)
In a silence of a house
That would rival any cathedral
I heard the distant baby cry
So clear even the dog looked up with apprehension
And well he should.

Two Angels Came to My Door

Two angels came to my door
Both far too vivid for a dream
With space of about a week
Or was it two?
The second a remarkable split up her dress
And intelligent and pretty.
I've always been a little slow with women folk
And wonder now if there was an agenda
Deeper than subscription sales
In that visitation of angels.

Two Cats

When you own two cats You must feed both of them When they come for food At the same time.

Two Cats Observed

Now that in winter
The hourse temperature
Is set at 68
I can't hlep but observe
The cats are much more apt
To be found sleeping together
Not nearly so much by affection
Or even some peculiar sense of shared fate
As a need that keeps each other warm.

Two Coaches

Zigmund and Kimbol Sounds like a law firm In a sense they were. They did not like me very much On their track I did not often win -And when I did it was because I had learned to listen vastly more To my coach within.

Uncle Don

The man who truly had everything Including a visit from Eleanor Roosevelt Taught me the word 'dimension' With a 'no'!

The mischief of that interchange so long ago is amazing in its capacity for destruction. My wife recoils at my embrace of its pharasaic face. A shadow of such strength and length though he is gone, That what was his is now my own.

The question is if it is an evil power or a thing that can bless with light To watch for pot holes in the road of a journey through a night.

Uniformity and Trash Cans

The trash cans stand like soldier sentinels before suburban homes Their uniforms of dark olive plastic Awaiting the trash truck's robotic touch One more step towards uniformity On which a host will feast.

Vacuous Acquisition

The theologian Jacque Ellul has stated
That the watch is the symbol of modern man.
After almost a life time of desire
I acquired this object's long sought face and name,
Discovered in its functioning the hollowness of my acquisition,
The pain of embracing advertising's big lie That a thing can make you happy.

I should have known better,
The subconcious being as powerful as it is,
That Mother Theresa's wisdom couldn't hold
My cynical friend from the world of advertising being correct
I didn't stand a chance.

The material world IS complicated A good pair of sneakers athletically owned Are hard to deny in impact where only The most young and desperate make them idols of worship.

Beware: the child, the house, the car, the title, the woman's image; Those long sought objects of desire When something as simple as sneakers May well be where your true satisfaction will lie.

Valentine Day Dessert

Valentine's Day what is becoming the traditional meal With wife and now with daughter Following dinner, a visit to McDonald's is negotiated for dessert, Hot fudge sundaes at the drive through window.

A voice strikes memory A forward lean from annonymous shadow Through wife's silhouette The touch of the hamburger girl's eyes Dessert on Valentine's Day.

Verdun Pax - (Snippets) 3

In Verdun I have seen
Land moguls of the war
Unhealed by a century
Still bleeding acred crosses.
The darkness of war
That strips the human soul
Lies buried in the heart
That Christ would touch,
If we could but feel
The deeper meanings of His word.

Very Much for Flossing

Modern life is a fast paced zoo and Our teeth being part of this calculus too Failure to floss is an issue for There is a struggle for better quality of years Which is balanced off against time demands and The pull of fears.

For logevity's sake I advocate slow rising so Before morning's most early light The dark conceals the grissly sight Of this old boy flossing.

It starts my day in a very nice way Helping my teeth do better and that Nice young dentist with no hairs of gray Has finally come to have his say In this gruesome matter of flossing.

Vincent Van Gogh as a Transatlantic Seagull

Nancy Grace of once upon a time Philadelphia fame
Told me of a seagull she had witnessed
On a trip by boat to Europe,
Leaving port the other gulls turned back to land
But this gull follwed the boat to Europe
Where upon arrival the creature was killed by the European gulls.
Though capable of spinning a good yarn
I do not think Nancy fabricated this story.
It seems Van Gogh was like this gull in art
Solitary in his courage and excellence
Who in his time flew solo to a new world
It makes me less quick to judge in many matters
Lest I become a killer gull.

Violence

If violence invited us to parade
The thing would find itself alone
So the Devil being wiley wraps it in more attractive
Though often more fear filling garb:
'My right to..., ' states' rights, 'My country right or wrong...' WMD
Always check the pretty words
To see if violence lies behind.

Vision

When in need of the positive for the fight Go to a gymnastic club with children of all ages, colors, type When a good spirit is upon their play. It may be as close to seeing angel's dance As you will ever come.

Visit To Brown's Ice Cream (Dairy Store) - Stillwater, MN

At 920 Olive Street West Forty blocks off the beaten track A mountain of ice cream for the price of a dime What poor tourists most need to know.

The locals have mastered their lessons so well They are not confused by the word 'Nelsons' on the roof Even as I cherish our young host's smile Even as much as the miracle of dinner for the price of a dime.

Vocabulary's Power

It came as no small piece of education When Bob Kimball spoke of:
'The inspiration of the Holy Spirit, '
The very same experience through Maslow's insight I knew as 'peak experience.'
Great was the shock to learn How much is vocabulary's power To unite or to divide.

Voice

Here I speak
Here you hear
Though hand to pen no longer clasps
To cast a word to paper.
A fragile thing a word
Still, it is my passion
And as I live it is
A fairer hand not being found.

WAG Song

Forgive me dear reader John Mellencamp gives us song I can't even write.

Walk! Walk! Walk!

Walk! Walk! Please walk.
Dr. Mehmet Oz of considerable medical fame
Has spoken clearly again what we already knew
From the scientific heroics of the Mayo Clinic Gang
Walk if you will do only one thing to care for yourself
Walk if you want to live
This greatest gift of all gifts - life
Is buttressed best by a thing as simple as a walk
And unseen faith that its day for good will come
As surely as Jesus or visits to a doctor's office.

Want To Be A Pilot?

My father served in the great war I have his form letter from F.D.R. With ancient yellow tape inside his war journal Enamored of airplanes at an early age I asked him once: 'Did you ever want to be a pilot?' 'No, ' he said. 'Not once I had to go out and start pciking up the pieces.' I never told him about the consortium I found Willing to explore a teen's transglobal air plans Nor Mother, she simply could not have handled it. Her goal was Harvard for her kid.

War Case

The case that went to war Would practice far and wide For what became eventuality. Despite healing efforts, it bears these scars.

It moves again but not to tune of war To gather child from a distant land Who we have come to love.

I wonder if this thing of swords to plowshares Can apply not only to a travel case But a host of other things, That by God's grace Can lead us from war's path To greater respect and understanding Where comes the better peace.

War Games

In Germany the Kaiser always won the war games The Pentagon here chose Colonel Paul Van Riper Marine Corps, Combat Veteran, Retired So able that he beat the odds Won the war game and was fired. There are always great dangers When a Kaiser must always win at war games.

With thanks to Malcolm Gladwell's book 'Blink' pages 100 to 125 BacK Bay Books, paperback, copyright 2005

War Win, With Words Of Explication (2005) (**** density level)

Turkeys did not win the war alone What won the war was more than War.

POET EXPLICATION: The logistical superiority of the United States during World War II was most apparent to the German General Staff in Dwight Eisenhower's successful delivery of Thanksgiving turkey to the troops during the 1944 campaign. It was in this demonstration of logis-tical power that the German high command realized that the war was lost. But behind Eisenhower is the far less appreciated figure of his mentor George Marshall. Marshall was also responsible for saving MacArthur despite the fact that MacArthur had tried to savage Marshall's career. In short Marshall was an absolutely selfless soldier and is an exemplar of what helped win the war at a spiritual level. The word spiritual is not used in the sense of religion. It is used in the sense of what Victor Frankl calls the noetic. A very good example of noetic spirituality is found in the portion of his war memoir 'Goodby Darkness' by William Manchester where he speaks of love as a force in war which informs the imperative for men and women to sacrifice.

War Wound

My father's wounds were real to me
His life holding very little of hypocrisy
If genes tell the story
His love of ice cream is mine
As well as capacity love things beautiful
His war is gone and mine as well
But I remember his war wound
A story he could only partially tell
That stood in the peculiar isolation of non-repetition.

Watching Morning Come

I like to watch morning come
It is better than sleep sacrificed to Charlie Rose
A poem no more crazy than Faulkner
A sun that does not shine
A poem that does not rhyme
Or does it?
God beyond sun and time?

Watching Washington Work

In the early days of convinced student ambition I watched Washington work where even the press didn't care The Special Subcommitte on Student Unrest to be exact the Honorable Edith Green - Chair.

I recall the specific names and faces and antics and lack the courage to tell you what truly went on.

Strangely I loved the representative from Alaska most, who later was killed in a plane crash running for the Senate their bodies never recovered, and a representative from New York City least - who wanted to be President.

The Alaskan was a man strangely full and the New Yorker strangely hollow but this is my theological judgement.

What could a student possibly know who once wanted to be President himself and lacks even today the courage to tell you how that little piece of Washington worked?

Water Writer

Our greatest water writer was Jesus
The divinity of history we have his name
A lover of such pure dimension
The self was lost
More surely than the Hebrew glyphs
That were swallowed by water.

We Must Be Like Freud

We must be like Freud
And follow where the evidence may lead
Against the fashions of the day
Against the scorn of peers
Who knowing much still know not all
And holding our great capacity for error tenderly
Search for truth and state: 'Here I am..'
I could be wrong but this is how I see it.

We Must Build a Firmament

The dog show allowed me to catch this lesson Watching the most junior handlers and The care of their seniors towards their development That we must build a firmament more of stars Than our fear of clouds.

Not for the navigation of great ships But as the only surety for small and fragile lives That live beyond the trajectories Of great rockets that place men upon a moon.

Wedding Meditation

Few marriages are made in heaven
These are among the harsh and hidden ways of life
So when you choose your life long friend and love
Remember that you also choose a business partner
Choose well then - and carefully To try and minimize the future's strife
For there is more to wedding than the wife.

Well Wishes Of The Season To All Of Six Pack Sensitivity

The sage six year old comes home from school and informs That we must break each individual noose Holding the plastic bottles to help protect entangled ducks I applaud her and her teacher's Holden Caufield sensitivity And the young naval officer who first tried to recruit me To this conspiracy of care twenty years ago.

West Point at its 2007 Edge

Distant memories of the West Point tac officer Doing push ups with his screw up underlings. The cemetery, The fresh grave of the beloved coach and so many names known from history. Its great museum of war, Jutting cliffs and the Hudson The great parade field Strange juxtaposition from the past of: Love and sacrifice and war.

When Prose Becomes Poetry - The Last Words of Elizabeth Hutchinson Jackson to Andrew Jackson

'Andrew, if I should not see you again, I wish you to remember and treasure up some things I have already said to you. In this world you will have to make your own way. To do that you must have friends. You can make friends by being honest andyou can keep them by being steadfast. You must keep in mind that friends worth having will, in the long run, expect as much from you as they give to you. To forget an obligation or be ungrateful for a kindness is a base crime, not merely a fault or a sin, but an actual crime. Men guilty of it sooner or later must suffer the penalty. In personal conduct be always polite but never obsequious. None will respect you more than you respect yourself. Avoid quarrels as long as you can without yielding to imposition. But sustain your manhood always. Never bring a suit in law for assault and battery or for defamation. The law affords no remedy for such outrages that can satisfy the feelings of a true man.

Never wound the feelings of others. Never brook wanton outrage upon your own feelings.

If you ever have to vindicate your feelings or defend your honor, do it calmly. If angry at first, wait till your wrath cools before you proceed.'

Have always loved this quote and want to share it as an early public domain valentine. Google helped me run it down. I first met it in the hallway of the Massachusetts Cottage at the George Junior Republic. I do not believe it was any accident that Bill and Daisy Millett, the house parents at the Mass, had it prominently displayed.

When Red Is Not Your Color

When red is not your color
But the only thing that's clean
Don't fret
Many a day has been successfully conquered
When the uniform was not pristine.

When You Meet The President Of The United States

When you meet the President Say 'hello' and let him talk This will put him at ease in your presence Creating the familiar which always helps As one who is used to be listened to.

Wife's Gift of Box of Cedar

It is even for one who loves boxes quite fine
As the one Sarah Chilinski brought from Denpermanente
Though not nearly as carefully joined.
In discussing life strategies
Sarah told me I must always keep that box
And, heeding her wisdom, I have strangely kept
My word all these many years,
But this hollowed slab of cedar that can bring the scent of a grove
From beyond our door
Is still truly beyond description.

Wife's Rose As A Vector Of Love Around Aunt Ruth's Vase

At 'Sans Souci' I witnessed A fresh rose upon Frederick's grave That made tremendous impression It seeming not to be an act of official care, This thing of roses and love holding an abiding attraction.

So, to this line's creation
I have your ancient bud vase of slender neck - once elegant Faux silver finish now intimating pewter
With luck at a good garage sale
It might fetch a dollar or even two.

To me it is a treasure
Worth more than its cost to hold
Loaded this eveining with a fresh rose
As with all matters of great love
As a vector of love I do not know
If that rose is a rose
That lives from or for you
Though you are long gone from view.

Wind Through Bamboo

Wind through bamboo A life time can not tell you The beauty of the sound.

Winter Air Travel

The clouds over Atlanta Dark and angry Foretell the coming storm.

Wisdom Of A Wealthy Man

The wealthiest man I ever knew With whom there was true friendship, Who counted diamonds as us lesser folk would dust, Said with true sadness in the only negative emotion he ever shared, Over those memorable and gracious lunch occassions, 'Your children grow up so quickly.' How correct he was and is.

P.P.S. (Post Poem Statement) These words are dedicated to the memory of Douglas Cooper.

With Love Hazard Is Made

With love the hazard is made A thousand things its object A legion of holes in chain armor Worn by countless seas Even a sword its confusing vector With love hazard is made.

Without Signature

Jean Cluett knew the great secret That we engrave on each others hearts With words only casually spoken So, - being wise and gracious - she was kind.

Clue told me of the first chapbook She did not believe it probably held any great poetry And probably she is correct given life's great capacity To reclaim and reconstruct without signature.

Word Craters

The trouble with being called 'Colonel' Or almost anything else either good or bad Is after the thousandth occurrence You start to believe it.

Word In The Morning

With garbage out and night lights off But before the morning symphony I try for a greater majesty Where reins the silence of the day (The strike of mantle clock withstanding) And through which God speaks A vector quiet as these lines.

Word Tones #1

Silence of a great city
In a small kitchen
The kitten nips at bare toes
The old cat tumbles the kitten
Cold milk with peanut butter cookies
Charlie Rose over
The refrigerator hums
Ink goes to paper smoothly.

Words After A Sick Room Visit

The well, the strong,
Will never understand the sick, the broken,
Till the Great Deomocrat comes.
It is easy to pretend that we do not hear the cold wind because it is not felt upon our necks.
Still the sound persists
Though reality denies sight its form.

To summon energy to fight or to surrender, I would not judge the cause. But even in defeat this earth can be sweet And leaving it no easy task.

Words Inspired by the Life of Chaplain Lyle Von Seggern (**** density level)

At Edison's great fire
He called his wife as witness
To pastel pillar twists of chemically fed flames
That could have destroyed both work and life
Of a less centered man.

Edison wore God's armor.

Our home has seen candescent storm enough That turns earth's dome to shattering white Yielding originalites of lightning that teach of fright This gospel is well written and established that We know beyond our capacity to understand.

In legion ways we still struggle with an ancient central foe called fear This thing that never pierced the great inventor's heart And teaches us in crucible a central truth of spirit Not even flame is strong enough to singe the hem of love.

Words to Great Alexander's Spirit

I only missed you by 2,300 years Yet presume to deduce from your record That you never learned how to relax Which is a shame because having conquered all There was so much instruction pleasure needed to give If only you could have stilled your tumult Long enough to have had a small taste Of a peace that does not come from success.

WWJD

He would read the Psalms.

He would read the Prophets especially Isaiah.

He would keep God at the center of his life.

He would quietly and continuously heal.

He would be unobserved and unknown.

He would be beyond the marks of gender.

His sex would be an accident.

He would be a friend to Gandhi in his early London days or Mother Theresa before her BBC debut.

He might well be quietly living next door with ernormous spiritual store.

He could be a Democrat or a Republican, conservative or liberal.

In short we will have to know him to know what he will have us do.

Young Breasts Ageing

Half century or so ago she wanted to be an architect, I wanted to be President Bright sun, an invitation to massage, she was a strawberry blond with the clear skin and the private room.

We slept together once but it is well we did not marry She could not tolerate the snoring of a courtship night Let alone the presures that would have come from a maverick's life.

She has gone on to greater things than death defying buildings And just as I have lost my hair I can not help but think Of the young woman who favored me once With the beauty of those young breasts now ageing Who I am protective of to this very line.

Young Idol Fallen

She was this old man's idol
This beautiful young teenager
Who worked at journaling and Yoga and picking pumpkins
To earn her privileged ski trips
Who could be entrusted with my house
Object of fantasy.
So the shock was not her Mother's alone
When she shred Mom's face in rage
And revealed something very deep within
Far different than the beauties I had observed
This thing known as sin.

Youth Advice In Four Stanzas

Become a reader as fast as you can.
The stuff that will change your life
The stuff that will strengthen you
(Even with out your knowing you are being strengthened)
Is in print some way
Become a reader as fast as you can.

Eat fruit. When choice is available choose Protein over carbohydrate and carbohydrate over fat.

Listen to those who are older than you Who do not want either your money or time Fifteen years difference can be nice.

If you have some money always keep some money.

Youth Advice On Dice

Sometimes you must gamble
And throw the dice
Though this is not considered nice
And in the vast majority of cases not practical to gain
The true issue here is a matter called 'discernment'
For sometimes, and only sometimes, you must throw the dice.

Youth and Age

You are so very young I, so clearly on the great hill's down side Yet last night we recognized each other And you called me - 'Sir' And this morning I write poetry.

Youth in a Starbucks Agora

In the crowded places I like to find a quiet corner and watch.

We are an interesting species Hierarchy being only a portion Of the observational calculus.

It is the young that concern me The young I will some day leave behind With their laptops that grant all the world In the form of screen up windows.

The world on their lap tops But something, I can not name, is lost -Has been taken from them.

Zero to Sixty

Zero to sixty is nothing!
That takes a car.
But a 3: 00 am half awake visage
Of a Chechnian terrorist in your room
(Off shoot of a sojourn in Russia)
Now 60 to 140 in 1.5 that is speed!
With only benefit of unimagined fear
And wife returning from the bath room.