

## Poetry Series

**James B. Earley**

**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

November 2009

**Publisher:**

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

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### **James B. Earley (5 April 1934)**

James B. Earley was born and reared at Mounds, within the rolling hills of Southern Illinois, nine miles north of the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. A Californian since 1956, he resides in the San Francisco Bay area. Having served twenty-one years in the employ of the Robert Mondavi Winery, Jim retired October 2006 from his treasured assignment...personal chauffeur to its legendary Founder and Chairman...Robert Mondavi.

An ardent disciple of the Robert Frost philosophy of simplicity in style, and clarity of thought, Earley vigorously pursues that poetic vision, passionately navigating its intoxicating culture...in rhythmic verse.....

Subscribing to the spiritual notion...'poetry is the window to the soul,' he enthusiastically embraces the medium, in any form, however the content.

Welcome..to the portfolio..of poetically infused short stories. Mostly serious..occasionally contrite...some whimsical...a few wacky...others tacky....though all...consistently...of the soul. Please browse....or linger..if you will!

.....For taking the flight, experiencing the mood, and sharing the passion.....thanks..

#### **Author's Note:**

This collection is dedicated to my family...the Muskeyvalleys/Muscovalleys....and...to Southern Illinois, and the little town called Mounds...and all the people in it...in that time...which I thought...would last.....forever.....

Email address: [earleyjim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:earleyjim@sbcglobal.net)

<http://www.authorsden.com/james-b-earley>

<http://myspace.com/moonbass89>

#### **Works:**

A Vision of Home {1989}

A Sultry Summer's Evening {1995,1996}

**....Oh...It Seems....Just Yesterday**

When the fever racked my body  
Who caressed my aching head  
Before I learned to feed myself  
Who saw to it that I was fed

Though she needs my help this morning  
...There is nothing I can do...  
To ease such dreadful suffering  
...You...have chosen to put her through

May I remind You...of my childhood  
....Oh...It seems...just yesterday  
Family gatherings....around Your altar  
...It was she....who led the way

Now...I beg...complete forgiveness  
...Deemed transgressions...whatever sin  
This...the child....of all those Sundays  
...Thank You Lord...Dear God...Amen

James B. Earley

## **...Margrit's Words....Addressing Jim**

...Julie.....Carissa  
Laureen and Kim  
And Margrit's words  
Addressing Jim

The day...a dreary  
.....One...of June  
It's moment...an even  
....Greater...gloom

Of death...without  
A doubt...expected  
...Still..the mind  
Outright rejected

The oddity...of  
God's will to give  
Then snatch away  
That right to live

So much....we fail  
....To understand  
Yet...clear...the role  
Of our fellowman

....An intense glow  
Amidst the gloom  
...Soothed the soul  
One day....in June

...And...'oxymoron'  
Lost its meaning  
.....Joyful-sorrow's  
Songs...are singing

Of Julie....Carissa  
Laureen and Kim  
And Margrit's words  
..Addressing....Jim

Author's note:  
.....Elegy to Mary Azevedo - June 2005

James B. Earley

### **...Momma's Odyssey**

Within our home was all we needed  
There was not a want for more  
Once grown and on my own  
...I realized then....that we were poor

She did not 'send' us off to church  
.....Instead....she led the way  
Through the very life she lived  
...She taught us how...to pray

In retrospect...she must have suffered  
...At times.....in abject pain  
Although.....I'll never know for sure  
Not once...did she complain

When God prepared that 'House Of Rest'  
....I know....he saw....her face  
This gentle soul...who's Heaven bound  
.....If indeed.....there's....such a place

Author's note:

Dedicated to my mother.....Rosie Leola Earley...1903 - 2001.  
.....Petite of figure...yet...a bastion of strength...whose very  
life..was an odyssey..of faith. If there is indeed a heaven..she  
will own a seat!

James B. Earley

## **A Dream...Deferred.....Perhaps**

Is happiness...an illusion  
...On the wings of time  
Sought...and pursued...  
Though impossible..to find

....That infinite mirage  
One....cannot clasp...  
An elusive...emotion  
Beyond....the grasp

A fleeting...apparition  
.....Or...does it exist...  
Some cruel hoax of nature  
.....Or a spiritual....twist

Whatever.....the answer  
.....Satisfaction....I take  
In that measure..of comfort...  
Only contentment...can make

James B. Earley

## **A Letter.....For Mary**

There's an old road  
.....Winding  
Along the stream  
.....Meandering

Romance...of a train  
...From God knows where  
Echoed.....sounds  
.....Rumbling

Walking...the hills  
.....Thinking....  
Of the joy..those sounds  
....Are bringing

Memories...welcome  
....The child again  
.....She's the treasure  
.....Of Jamieson....Canyon

Authors note:  
Dedicated to the memory of...Mary Azevedo....and....to her earthly home...Jamieson  
Canyon.

James B. Earley

## **A Mountain Speaks**

That distant valley  
Far below  
Was I...as a child  
.....Eons ago

I've known great happiness  
Shared...such strife  
As that of the dinosaur  
Struggling for life

From a simple existence  
I've seen Man grow  
In the scheme of evolution  
I'll watch.....him go

I question.....my being  
Invariably...I find  
.....A mere speck of sand  
On.....God's beach...of time

Author's note: The poem addresses Mt. Tamalpais, geographically to the immediate north of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge. (The Mountain is sometimes known as 'The Sleeping Maiden, ' of Native American legend.) From my home, overlooking the northeastern perimeter of San Francisco Bay, I am blessed with a spectacular panorama of this magnificent creation! Viewing the Mountain, north to south, one can imagine the figure of a reclining female with an abundance.....of long...flowing hair.

During periods of intense reflection, considering the Mountain....its splendor...its life...its aggregate history...its future...its reticent humility...and the arrogant juxtaposition of Mankind, I often wondered, should the Mountain speak...What would it have to say? This work is the manifestation of untold hours of meditative thought.....a spiritual rendition of extraordinary.....time....and place!

Thanks to Rani Turton.....whose observation was the catalyst inspiring the author's remark....

James B. Earley

## A 'Saint Valentine' .....Moment

.....I never knew.....  
I'd know.....such bliss  
...How could...I know..  
I'd feel.....like this

.....I.....never knew...  
You'd...ever....care  
.....Until.....alone  
While...sitting there

....And  
.....Through  
.....Your  
.....Eyes

.....I knew  
James B. Earley

## A Vision Of Home

Somewhere within dwells the soul of a boy  
And childhood dreams of Illinois  
....With thoughts.....of home again

Whose summers of youth are long gone by  
A returning 'stranger' is the reason why  
It's not easy to go home again

Why tell a soul who I am  
Would anyone really give a damn  
On the streets of home again

A solemn stroll through rolling hills  
Gaze reminiscent on dusty fields  
....The aroma...of home again

An old house sits.....atop the hill  
The swing on the porch...is swinging still  
...Memories.....of home...again

Down the road.....to the aging...Church  
Again feel the glow of the old folk's touch  
.....So near...it's almost...home again

Autumn encroaching...the kids are in line  
The classroom..the books...and recess time  
.....And sounds.....of home again

Mirage in the midst of a desert waste  
.....A faint illusion of another place

...That vision

.....Of home

.....Again

Author's note:

Encompassing an impassioned sense of spiritual yesteryear, 'A Vision Of Home' is dedicated to that sacred Mecca....by the side of the road....at the foot of the hill, 'New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, ' Mounds Illinois.....and to its pastors....and parishioners...past...and present, with all the love.....and affection.....conceivable.....

James B. Earley

**Absent Theft..Is It Possible To Amass...Millions...Billions..**

.....? ?

James B. Earley

## **African Brother**

Who was the villain  
When it all began  
Some fair-haired stranger  
From a faraway land

Or the African brother  
Selling his neighbor away  
In exchange of whatever  
The fair-haired stranger would pay

For the brutal betrayal  
Of his own damned kin  
Has anything changed  
Since the original sin

Who was the villain  
.....When it all...began

James B. Earley

## **An Epitaph.....I Stumbled.....Across**

May his memory

.....Be  
Measured

.....As.....

His fans...

.....Treasured...

..The...

.....Amateur

.....Gynecologist...

.....He was

James B. Earley

## **An Ounce Of Crack**

All.....around us  
Youths.....are dying  
.....Victimized..by greed  
Of a WALL STREET kind

Frequent.....arrests  
.....An ounce.....of crack  
This 'War On Drugs'  
.....Is it.....really.....that

Congress.....it's yours  
Some answers.....to find  
.....Rid.....the Nation...this Cancer..  
At the source.....of the crime

\*  
\*  
\*

Government, for whatever reason, seems disinterested in addressing the devastating impact of 'illicit drug trafficking' pervasive throughout every community across this Country! This epidemic would not possibly survive absent two key ingredients, sourcing and distribution.

James B. Earley

## **Anniversary**

A faith with trust  
This pledge to give  
In thought and deed  
As one shall live...  
Vows they made  
Those years ago...today

Now they celebrate  
Once again  
And have this new  
Year's day begin...  
As then  
...Those years ago...today

James B. Earley

## Anti-Abortion's Religious Creed

.....Let them live....

.....SEXUALLY MOLEST

.....Then....send them away...

.....To DIE

.....In some

.....Politically

.....Orchestrated

.....Ill-defined

.....Hypocritically inspired

.....Criminal activity

.....Called

.....WAR

Author's note:

History suggests that the fundamental concept of 'War, ' is born of hypocrisy. In this instance, the subject was broached to illustrate its connection to the moment....and further the argument that....hypocrisy reigns as the critical EVIL....within the 'CHURCH'....and indeed throughout...the HUMAN CONDITION!

James B. Earley

## Aristotle's Wisdom

Friend - A single Soul Dwelling  
Within Two Separate bodies

.....Aristotle 384-322 B.C.

Did the crucifixion...ever cross his mind  
As those eloquent words...poured out  
Could the love ...which Judas...displayed..to Christ  
...Be the friendship ...he wrote...about

Were his thoughts...of the "Shipp"...lost and adrift  
...Somewhere...on the sea...of deceit  
The man...on the stand...the tale of betrayal  
...Of whom...did the philosopher...speak

Was the white Bronco...we saw...on the road...one day  
...Perhaps....the vehicle....which friendship drove  
During...the dream...the philosopher...dreamt  
...When...that poignant verse...he wove

Of two...distinct and separate...bodies  
...Where...A single soul...dwells within  
Might Aristotle's wisdom...be some...sacred vision  
...Through which...God...defined...A friend

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...Should ever..."my friend"...be troubled  
Shoulders bent...from the load....they tote  
May there...be the friend...to comfort...that friend  
...Of such...as the philosopher.....wrote

James B. Earley

## **Armageddon's Brink**

War and battle  
The sake of space  
Denounce a man  
For simply his race

Pass the shelter-less  
In the cold of night  
No sense of compassion  
To that homeless plight

Confusion throughout  
A world in disarray  
When God created all  
Was it planned that way

In.....his image  
Everything....everyone  
A spiritual kinship  
With a common bond

Equally creating  
As he placed us here  
A universal breath  
For all to share

And with that breath  
Came an awesome dawning  
Will there be....another sunrise  
.....In the morning

James B. Earley

**As....I Recall**

.....Stranger's face

.....Visual embrace

..... Chance encounter

...The marketplace

.....'Twas.....

.....A Wednesday noon

.....As I recall

James B. Earley

## 'Atheism'

Shadows...of...the evening  
Morning sun.....all.....erased  
Earth...compelled...by something  
Revolves....again..in space

Yet.....this..escapes...the atheist  
Though..he sees..that sun..ashining  
Just.....as it was...on yesterday  
Still.....a living God...denying

Author's note:

Atheism - A fraudulent...arrogant....self-centered concept..for no one..is..devoid...of..FAITH! One's...every act..is a demonstrated exercise in faith....that...spiritual...belief...in the existence.....of...a Greater Power. It matters not.....the label!

James B. Earley

## **Aunt Cecilia....And Uncle Elbert**

Elbert...the fog is thick this morning  
I'm not so sure...that you can see  
.....Aw-shucks.....relax Cecilia  
Don't concern yourself with me

As well you know...this road I've traveled  
Some forty years.....without a hitch  
Aunt Cecilia...missed...her bus that morning  
When Uncle Elbert...failed....to miss the ditch

James B. Earley

## **Because Of You...I Rise**

An emotional moment  
For there in the mail  
Was a bundle of cards  
All..wishing me well

.....A joy unique  
As I read each one  
Pondering the messages  
Written thereon

You're a special group  
In a generous way  
This splendid suprise  
That brightened my day

Stronger I'm getting  
And less the pain  
A few more weeks  
I'll chuck the cane

And back in your midst  
Your faces to see  
With friends like you  
What a grand place to be

James B. Earley

## **Black Man's Dilemma**

Where would we go if told to leave  
This land where our kidnapped forefathers grieved  
For life as it once were  
And not as destiny's mind perceived

We have no heritage to call our own  
Where could we go if summarily thrown  
From this oasis of bigotry and hate  
Long....our adopted home

Would our foreign kin whose blood we share  
In Africa and Europe.....welcome us there  
Will they perhaps the least bit care  
If ever we're told to leave

\*  
\*  
\*

May the God who planned Slavery's plight  
Declare aloud...our vested right  
To this soil...and grant us strength  
.....To stand.....and fight

Should ever...we're told to leave

James B. Earley

## **Carmel-By-The-Sea**

She prays his deeds are sanctuaried  
.....In the storage room...of time  
Yet fear...his indiscretions...known  
..Should.....the tapes of time unwind

And so....she lives....and loves in vain  
...Another...lonely night.....as she.....  
Grieves for romance..and days of when  
.....At Carmel.....By-The-Sea.....

James B. Earley

**'Confused Mind'.....Defined**

.....The

.....Poet

.....Subscribing

.....To

.....The

.....Concept....

.....'Atheism'

James B. Earley

## **Courage...Or Lack Of....**

.....This is an open statement in response to the recent PoemHunter postings by the anonymous 'Black Alex.'

As a person of color, I've known the ignominy, the humiliation, the vitriolic pain of racism, both in statement and deed. My years have taught me acceptance, understanding the valued principle of free-speech. However, I do believe that writers..spewing venom..such as this...should dare exercise courage of his/her convictions, and leave free-speech...unfettered.....by the cowardly cloak of.....anonymity!

James B. Earley

## **Definition of Oxymoron**

Honest politician.....

James B. Earley

## **Definition of Poet**

A dime-store psychiatrist.....  
.....Desperately seeking,  
And occasionally...dispensing  
.....A modicum....of...neurotic relief

James B. Earley

## Democracy

That system of government  
.....Where a 5 - 4 plurality....  
Unconditionally trumps  
....The amalgamated wisdom  
.....of.....  
105,405,100..franchised  
...Voters...who then..exercise...  
Their constitutional...privilege  
.....To accept it all....

Author's note:

..Bush v Gore...531 U.S.98 (2000) ...the United States Supreme  
Court Decision of 12 December 2000.....effectively resolving the  
2000 Presidential Election in favor of George W. Bush.

James B. Earley

## **Destiny's Choice**

Which road....which fork  
Which path I take  
Not knowing why  
This turn I make

Elsewhere my soul  
Would want to be  
That distant turf  
It beckons me

The horizon fades  
My pathway shrinks  
In vain I seek  
That elusive link

Ah....the ominous glow  
Of a lightened load  
The path to love  
At the side of the road

James B. Earley

## **Destiny's Wisdom**

....Once.....the winds  
Of passion flowed  
...Amongst the leaves  
On vineyard's row

Touching the vines  
With such desire  
Fueling the flames  
....Of a raging fire

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\*  
\*

Destiny's wisdom  
....Then...rearranged  
Those winds of passion  
...To winds...of change

A frigid chill  
Displaced the old  
With angry gusts  
....Of bitter cold

James B. Earley

## Distant Haze

There was a knock upon my door  
...In...the light...was she  
Grab your coat and in the rain  
Come take a walk with me

So many times we'd hop the bus  
To...A faraway...picture show  
Days of Summer we'd take our poles  
...And fishing...we would go

We'd sit atop the earthen bank  
...Reflections in...the rippling...water  
Laughing and talking...the two of us  
...Without...romance...to bother

Graduation night...A distant haze  
I've struggled with...so much  
...The day...we went....our separate way  
And failed to keep in touch

...Inquiring...of her...sometime ago  
From a relative I chanced to meet  
'A prostitute...on drugs...she is  
.....Working...some city street'

Stinging words.....in that reply  
An avalanche...of tears...inside  
The pain of which I won't deny  
And now...I hear....that she....has died

If perchance...it was...her darkest hour  
...When that path.....she chose.....to take  
Then...may God please...forgive...the call  
.....The call.....I failed...to make

James B. Earley

## Ego's Will

'Ego's Will'...A perception.....of Man's inhumanity to Man.....penned late evening,12  
March 2003.....

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Not..in my name  
Shall ego's will  
That obscene thrill to kill

Our hapless youths and others  
Much too young  
To buy....one last drink  
At the brink..of..annihilation

Not...in my name  
Shall ego's will  
That obscene thrill to kill  
....and maim...

Yet claim that maim 'Salvation's' maim  
And...therefore...decidedly not the same  
....But..democratically different

Not...in my name  
Shall ego's will  
That obscene thrill to kill

....Assassinate...  
A sovereign nation's head of state  
And..confiscate..its resources  
...Desecrate..its land...and decimate  
....Its people

My country's shame  
Not...in my name

\*  
\*

'No man is an island...any man's death diminishes me...never ask for whom the bell  
tolls, it tolls for thee.' John Donne (1572-1631)

James B. Earley

## **Eighteen Souls**

Woodlawn Cemetery...Santa Monica  
...Just beyond.....the Palisades  
Where eighteen souls...lay buried  
.....Within....a plot....beneath..the shade

...Of a gnarled...old tree...growing  
From a seedling destiny placed  
...On hallowed grounds...at Woodlawn  
Where eighteen souls...embrace

...In...some sacred...convocation  
From a cast...of many drawn  
...Eighteen souls.....were favored  
Amongst..thousands...dead...at Woodlawn

Whyler....Franco.....Lockwood...Diaz  
...Some...of the chosen...few  
Of eighteen souls....summoned  
...To that spiritual.....rendezvous

With the gnarled...old tree...growing  
...Whose roots...some reason....sought  
To touch....eighteen souls...at Woodlawn  
...And those...eighteen souls.....escort

Into.....millennia.....called.....forever  
...Where God...has etched...that last...Decree  
On....its scroll.....may joy.....be written  
...For eighteen souls...

.....Eighteen souls  
.....And the quaint  
.....Old tree

### **Author's note:**

Soon after the 1994 'Northridge earthquake' Los Angeles....my wife and I literally stumbled across this extraordinary spectacle. Indeed a striking scene...replete with poignancy all its own. Imagine a large tree...its roots surfacing immediately...extending to...and disappearing in...18 individual grave sites!

Woodlawn Cemetery...1847 - 14th St....Santa Monica CA 90404

James B. Earley

## Essence.....Of Solitude

Gratitude....to you....my friend  
For the exotic joy you shared  
When speaking of an enchanted place  
Then choosing to take me there

I saw a spot secluded where  
Such rustic charm exudes  
A mystic aura which awed my Soul  
With the essence of solitude

The only sounds....a songbird's chirp  
...A falling twig.....perhaps  
And the muted cry of an insect's wail  
Some spider's web entrapped

Shadows hypnotic in romantic pursuit  
Danced a ritual of sensual quest  
To seduce the rays which frolicked about  
...At this quaint ethereal fest

Whose drama ends...as sunset fades  
To resume in the morning's glow  
...Down the lane.....across the bridge  
.....At  
.....Eucalyptus  
.....Row

### Author's note:

Some years ago, I gifted a copy of my book 'A Vision Of Home' to my dear friend, Susan Henderson. Later, she asked if I would accompany her to visit a revered place of personal spiritual significance, as she desired my photo to have along with the book.

The poem is a vivid recollection of that Napa Valley moment, the searing beauty of what I observed, and sensed, that stunning, sunny, lazy, summer's afternoon.

Regrettably, the spiritual haven, as I saw it, no longer physically exist. Within a couple years of our visit, this natural phenomenon was forever lost...through.....development.

'Essence.....Of Solitude' is dedicated, with love and appreciation, to Susan.....and.....to her family!

James B. Earley

## **Ethnicity**

JAMES B. EARLEY

American

of

African Ancestry

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BARACK OBAMA

African-American

James B. Earley

## **Fiji Islands**

Howling winds in drenching pain  
Across the Fiji Islands fanned  
A typhoon's thrust to kiss the surf  
Where once she walked the shifting sands

Then just as quickly disappeared  
Into the sea from whence it came  
In the distance could be heard  
The mournful wailing of her name

Author's note:

For..... Angie Guridi, a dear friend, and Fijian native, who one day asked, 'Would you write a poem about me? '

James B. Earley

## **Filbert Tree**

Now the woman  
A girl was she  
Who played beneath  
The filbert tree

As she spoke  
An awareness grew  
That filbert tree  
I also knew

James B. Earley

## **Final.....Analysis**

There is a message somewhere written  
Etched in the annals of time  
In that message a list of names  
And on that list is mine

Would rather you not assemble  
In some quaint house of prayer  
Instead go on your daily way  
As if I were still there

And recollect some thoughts of me  
Whatever comes to mind  
Then sing that song to my memory  
When..at last...it comes..my time

James B. Earley

## **George Bush...Affliction**

Uncontrollable.....Putin

Author's note:

Vladimir Putin (pronounced poo-ten) former Russian President...current Prime Minister.....and, George Bush antagonist.

James B. Earley

## **Glass Of Wine**

Romance sometimes  
.....A fragile thing...  
Perhaps...tenacious  
...The spirit cling

For in the texture  
....Lies the strength  
Profound the structure  
...The more intense

What logic of...  
It all becomes  
....Yet..mystical  
It is....to some

....The powers of  
That noble vine...  
Romance...a legacy  
...In the glass of wine

James B. Earley

## Good And Evil

Devastation....wrought  
.....In agonizing ill.....  
Of God's....omnipotence  
.....Or..Satan's.....will

Would...an Omnipotent God  
Allow...Satan's power..then  
...Might...the Devil...himself...  
Be some....necessary...sin

\*

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..And 'good'....and 'evil'  
Destiny's.....course.....  
Conceived...and executed  
..By that...Omnipotent Force

James B. Earley

## Grandpa's Legacy

That wise..old sage..  
A philosophical...gent  
....Legends...he shared  
And wisdom.....he lent

.....A joy.....to visit...  
And work.....the land  
Enraptured..by the presence  
.....Of that grand...old man

Every now.....and then  
...He'll pass this way....  
Shadows..of the moment  
....Echoing.....yesterday

With thoughts.....of life....  
Believed.....to never end  
...Thanks...for the memories...  
My grandfather.....my friend

Dedicated.....to my maternal grandfather...Jasper Lowery.

James B. Earley

## **Greed...Of Death**

.....Might....life exist  
Through sake of chance  
.....Some odd result  
Of happenstance

Or is...what is  
...Supposed to be...  
Ordained precise  
.....By destiny

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Must then...we live  
..To...simply die  
From greed of death  
..For want...of why

James B. Earley

## Happy New Year

I called you up  
But you were gone  
.....So I do  
As I am prone

That is to write  
When I may not speak direct  
.....and use  
Whatever intellect  
I muster

.....To get  
The message through  
Which is...Happy New Year...to your family  
....And.....especially.....to you

James B. Earley

## **How Might.....The Reverend Wright.....Be Wrong...**

.....The Halls of Congress.....at the Liars' Club  
Where TRUTH.....never once.....belonged...  
A Nation's hypocrisy.....and the Pastor's wrath  
...How might....The Reverend Wright....be wrong....

### **OBSERVATION:**

Of the varied...anti-Jeremiah Wright sentiments, 'divisive, racist, un-American, etc., '  
curiously absent is the accusation labeled.....'LIAR.'

James B. Earley

## **Is Not....Perception.....Reality**

Reality says.....they've passed away  
.....Is not.....perception.....reality.....  
For I feel...a living presence...as though  
.....They stand....right next.....to me

Those guiding hands.....of long ago  
.....So firm....against.....my brow  
As strong and gentle...as yesterday  
...Is the warmth....which I....know now

That legacy of.....the distant past  
.....Still.....a mighty roar  
Memories.....sustain.....my soul  
.....And on...whose wings....I soar

Reality says.....they've passed away  
...Silenced.....in death.....and then  
Perception says...they're just...as close  
....And real....as way.....back when

James B. Earley

**Is....'Democracy'....By Force.....**

.....'Democracy'

James B. Earley

## **Jealousy**

.....No buts  
Noooo.....Nuts..

Did it....again!

Messy....  
.....Jessie

James B. Earley

**Lipstick....On A Bigot**

.....Is

.....Still

.....A

.....Bigot

James B. Earley

## **'Memoirs'.....Of A Cunning.....Linguist**

Author's Note:

....Caution....adult material...and....may be  
considered....distasteful.....to some....

.....Some wizened poets.....gathered...  
For a challenge.....thought absurd  
...'Compose...a poem.....of driven passion...  
Using only.....a single.....word'

...An old codger.....rose.....and made...his way...  
To the podium.....painfully.....slow  
...'Hell...I have two...damn poems...for ya...  
Cunnilingus.....and Fellatio'

James B. Earley

## **Mr. Price....The Principal**

The student body adored Mr. Price..the principal  
Though.....despising his floppy hat  
.....Upon the High School grounds...they burned it  
Mr. Price.....resigned.....shortly after that

James B. Earley

## **My Friend**

.....My friend.....  
Indeed you've been my friend  
Through all these years  
Spanning when

I first laid eyes upon your face  
Fond memories of which  
No evil may detract  
....Nor....shall time erase

James B. Earley

## **My Son**

An old flame  
Passed my way  
I heard a voice  
Within me say

Call out to her  
And say hello  
Another voice  
Said oh no..no

What's done is done  
Is done....is done  
The Devil passed  
Your way...my son

James B. Earley

## **Napa Valley**

.....And now....

I find myself at this place  
.....I never chose

Yet.....could not have planned  
A more delightful life  
Than...with those bewitching years I've known

.....At this place.....I never chose

James B. Earley

## **Nevada**

Come along with me  
To a place I know  
Where tumbleweeds  
And sagebrush grow

Where lizards and scorpions  
Run around all day  
At night the Gila monsters  
Come out to play

Flash floods unleashing  
A dreadful might  
Howling sandstorms  
In the dead of night

The place...of romance  
It's often called  
They're lying dear ones  
.....I've seen it all

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Imagine....the Creator  
An air of great dismay  
..A bowed head...'Nevada'..he said  
And sadly.....walking away

James B. Earley

## **'Nigger' - A Black Man's Perspective**

1.a. a contemptuous caste-driven usage generally applied to non-members of the Imperial Society of the Socioeconomic Elite. b. a second-class citizen. c. an affectionate term of endearment mutually expressed amongst some Americans of African ancestry.

Author's note:

.....'Truth' - The true or actual state of a matter. (Webster's College Dictionary)

James B. Earley

## **Not Physically Crossed**

Sleepless nights  
Emotionally tossed  
Blur the line  
Not physically crossed

Waning hours  
Life still given  
Memories haunt  
Days once striven

The afterlife  
Why even mention  
.....Fiction.....fact  
Or supposition

But if there is  
Why must one toss  
And grieve the line  
Not physically crossed

James B. Earley

## **Nursing Home**

They frown  
....They smile  
They sit awhile  
And soon the day  
Will pass...and then  
...Tomorrow..do...it all

.....Again

James B. Earley

## **O.J. Simpson Jury (murder)**

Too dense to sit in judgement  
.....Too ignorant....to understand  
An intellectual....incapacity  
....Too dumb...to comprehend

What sworn liars....say...is gospel  
....Never question why they deceive  
Twelve...under-educated jurors  
Lacking wisdom....to believe

Confused.....about the concept  
Of the term.....integrity  
And therefore.....see...sand castles crumbling  
...Where the mountain....was said to be

...Of those who see....the mountain  
Might..intellectual incapacity...be the fear  
.....To the twelve.....who rendered judgement  
On what the masses.....chose not.....to hear

The following is the narrator's response to the poet Marilyn Lott's query.....'do you feel O.J. Simpson is innocent of the prosecutorial charge of murder? '

Dear Marilyn,

Interestingly...no one previously has asked me that question. Via radio, and television I closely monitored the judicial proceedings from start to finish. What piqued my interest was my acute familiarity with the Los Angeles Brentwood area, gleaned through extensive work-related travel, during the early 1980's.

Innocent.....hardly! Not guilty.....yes! The prosecution presented ample evidence to convict. Problem is, there were significant flaws within some of that evidence. The circumstance of the 'glove' was critical to the case. One of the major issues confronting the jury was the testimony of Detective Mark Furhman.....and the fact that he lied during its presentation. That falsehood was not related to a material fact of the case.....but...a lie nonetheless. This turn of events, amongst others, created serious pause in the minds of the jurors....in terms of his overall credibility.....as the defense had raised troubling questions in that regard! The jury, under its burden, rendered the only possible verdict.....it honestly could. Not guilty!

Again.....innocent.....hardly! Acted alone.....doubtful!

My friend, this is my take.....and thanks for asking.....

JBE

James B. Earley

## O.J. Simpson Trial (murder)

\*Author's Note: It is not the intent to malign, nor denigrate the memory of the two people who died tragically. Rather, the composition addresses brief periods of levity apparent during the course of the 1995 trial proceedings.

Extraordinary talent...of such persuasion  
...As Uelmen.....from Stanford School  
And...a finagling.....F. Lee Bailey  
...Who is...clearly...nobody's fool

The thinker.....Alan Dershowitz  
...Of the faculty...at Harvard Law  
Looking over.....Ito's shoulders  
In search...of some...appellate flaw

And the bag-man...Robert Kardashian  
Shrewdly...in charge...of luggage checks  
Carl Douglas and Peter Neufeld  
.....And his sidekick...Barry Scheck

And Johnnie Cochran....and Shapiro  
....Legal sharpies....all perhaps  
Quite...at home...and most at ease  
With the concept...of courtroom craps

William Hodgman...somewhat psychic  
Brilliantly...feigned...a heart attack  
Then disappeared...to his upstairs office  
Too damned smart...to ever...come back

Goldberg...Kelberg...Cheri and Woody  
Every utterance...A poetic display  
Of Shakespearean prose...in its glory  
...No finer thespians in all L.A.

Then there's Harmon...squeezing Charmin  
Just in case...it gets too deep  
And there's the fellow...at the table  
Who...so often...appears asleep

Forever doomed...to a living...nightmare  
Of Simpson's greatest...commercial hit  
Waving and smiling....before the jury  
...Christopher's gloves...just don't fit

....There is not...an adversary  
More formidable...than Marcia Clark  
Which leaves one...somewhat...confused  
And lost...completely...in the dark

.....Most...of all...Gil Garcetti  
Analyzing...his wayward scheme

What the Hell....is Darden doing  
.....On anybody's...legal team

James B. Earley

## **Obama...The 'Single' Political Truth**

....Barack Obama....  
Authenticated.....thus  
.....Fifty-percent....you-all...  
And the balance.....us....

James B. Earley

## Old Folk's Home

They wait...

At times it seems  
Without a care  
And then again  
Resigned despair

They wait...

Whatever blessings  
Longevity holds  
Though doubting eyes  
Betray the soul

They wait...

Till death  
One day erase  
The shackles of  
That wretched place

They wait.....

James B. Earley

## Optometrist

Cover your eye..Mr. Earley  
...Now what do you see..  
It's you.....Doctor  
....Looking at me...

I sense.....Mr. Earley  
You're mocking..  
.....Me.....  
No Doctor....as I look at you  
...Clearly...it's only you I see

Some..other..optometrist  
.....I suggest...you see...  
There's a pain...in my ass....Mr. Earley  
.....Just.....looking at me

James B. Earley

## **Orgasmic Groans**

Somewhere beyond horizon's reach  
Incessant waves lap at her feet  
She heaves and moans orgasmic groans  
Her body sways to passion's beat

Pulsating wildly in such throes  
And though the sounds are loud and clear  
She doesn't seem at all to mind  
Who might see or who might hear

And cast some disapproving eye  
Or watch in voyeuristic lust  
Her silhouette upon the water-bed  
Simply doing what she must

To satisfy all she's ever held  
Within her fickle grip  
I for one..have known her joy  
On a cruise aboard..that ship

James B. Earley

**Oxymoronic.....Dilemma**

The 'Black' Republican

James B. Earley

## Passion's Pride

...Alone.....I sit....  
By...the fishing hole  
Didn't bring....don't need  
...No.....fishing pole

Just want...to catch  
A breath.....of air  
.....And reconcile...  
Distraught....despair

.....For in my slumber...  
Though....wide.....awake  
.....Passion's.....pride...  
Fueled.....my mistake

...And now...so alone...am I...  
By.....the fishing hole  
Didn't bring.....don't need  
...No.....fishing pole

Author's note:

.....Just....the way....life is.....sometimes.....

James B. Earley

## **Patches**

When death ends life  
A thread is torn  
The knot is tied  
And the child is born

The cycle but  
A fabric patched  
Together bound  
Though unattached

The needle sews  
Yet darkness reign  
While shadows ask  
Why is the pain

When death ends life  
And the thread is torn  
And the knot is tied  
And the child is born

James B. Earley

## **Perspective**

Pyramids....of Egypt  
...Swooning stacks...of stone  
The Colorado...a fawning stream  
...On some quirky quest of home

And the Asian Himalayas  
...Mesmerized piles of dirt  
Awed...perhaps...in the metamorphosis  
...Whence cometh...the silken shirt

James B. Earley

## **Portrait**

Whenever I ponder  
The true meaning of 'friend'  
A portrait of you  
....Rekurs again

Definitions are fleeting  
And fade with time  
Forever is the moment  
When souls entwine

I'll cherish your portrait  
As a keepsake of when  
A moment of destiny  
Defined the word...friend

James B. Earley

## **Purest Saint**

.....James B. Earley...  
.....The purest Saint...  
.....To have graced..  
.....The Earth!

....I am.....James B. Earley...

.....And...I approve...

.....This message

Author's note:

Political ads....and the fallacy...thereof! If...truth...not now....then...WHEN?

James B. Earley

## Reflections

Whatever the anguish  
That grief I share  
Any burdens you have  
Together we'll bear

To ease what pain  
Such misery begets  
Indeed my friend  
I owe you that

For the joy which surrounds  
When I picture your face  
Mysteriously my woes  
Are suddenly erased

And my pathway seems brighter  
Through the mere fact we've met  
Oh.....yes....yes....my friend  
I do.....owe you that

James B. Earley

## **Robert Mondavi.....**

Tribute

To

Robert Gerald Mondavi

June 18 1913 - May 16 2008

Delivered

at

COPIA  
Napa, California

May 21 2008

Reflecting here today, I stand convinced that I am indeed a fortunate man. Having lived 21 years in close communion with such an historical giant of a man, is a gratuitous dream...most....only imagine.

One of my fondest appreciations of Mr. Mondavi was his extraordinary sense of humility. He reigned at the pinnacle of his profession, traveled the world in privileged fashion, yet reveled in the company of the common man.....never finding himself too busy to pause and converse with anyone who approached. He cultivated that innate desire to reach out.....and maintain...a spiritually unique connection throughout a disparate spectrum of mainstream society.

About ten years ago, Emma Koefoed, my neighbor's 9 year-old daughter approached me asking, "Do you really work for Robert Mondavi Winery? " She followed with "Do you ever see, and talk with Mr. Mondavi? " I answered in the affirmative, to which she replied, "You're so lucky, I'd like to meet him." Why would you like to meet him, I asked? "Well, I saw him on the Charlie Rose Show, and I think he's a great man, and I'd really like to meet him."

Later, I related that story to Mr. Mondavi. There was a broad smile on his face.....and twinkling in his eyes...as he said, 'You're kidding.....bring....her....up! '

A few days before Christmas, little Emma, and her mother, Alexis, were invited to his office.....for a scheduled 5-10 minute meeting. Thrilled with the company of his young visitor, he soon asked Mrs. Mondavi to join. What initially was to be a brief meeting, eventually became a 45 minute festive occasion, adorned with scrumptious servings of milk and cookies, fresh from the Vineyard Room!

Though blessed with a wealth of treasured memories, this is particularly favored for its vivid portrayal of character.....that spiritual essence so gracefully defining this extraordinary gentleman, my beloved mentor.....and confidant.....Robert Mondavi.

James B. Earley

## **Santa Monica Mountains..Kanan Dume**

Santa Monica Mountains....Kanan Dume  
There...in the distance...and very soon  
.....I'll be on the beach....at Malibu

.....High....in the hills.....of Pepperdine  
I gaze.....at the sea...the world is mine  
....The beach.....at Malibu

Wade in the surf.....of the crescent bay  
...Watch the sun say...goodnight....to day  
On the beach.....at Malibu...

When last...I've traveled...old Kanan Dume  
.....Strolled.....in the light....of my...last moon  
On the beach.....at Malibu...

Set...the ashes...of my existence.....free  
.....To live.....throughout.....eternity  
There.....on the beach.....at Malibu

James B. Earley

## **Season's Magic**

A taste of harvest  
Permeates the air  
Fragrance...igniting  
.....The atmosphere

Season's magic  
Wends its way again  
Wine nectar flows  
....At journey's end

James B. Earley

## **Senator Jessie Helms**

When as a child...I committed  
An act sufficiently crass  
Mother would grab a limb from the elm tree  
And she'd promptly..whip my ass

Whatever the infraction  
I was never denied a seat  
At my mother's table  
When it came time to eat

A philosophy applicable  
To the errant Jessie Helms  
For right there in Washington  
.....Are plenty.....of elms

So...welcome the Senator to your table  
Don't deny him the seat  
Just whip his ass..then pass the gavel  
Now Mr. Chairman.....let's eat

Author's note:

Helms, vying to become Senate Foreign Relations Chair, ignited a 1994 political firestorm, with the controversial suggestion, 'President Clinton better not show up around here (Helms' home state of North Carolina) without a bodyguard.'

Helms narrowly survived the heated opposition, and was successfully confirmed by the United States Senate.

James B. Earley

## **Society's Burden**

Should not society bear the burden  
Of what....guilt cannot erase  
Every soul a soldier fighting  
On that battlefield of faith

Through example teach the children  
That bigotry is simply learned  
The passion will lay in ashes...ruined  
With the book of hatred burned

And church pews on Sunday morning  
Where segregation shares an equity  
Will release God's name from bondage  
...Then.....only then....shall we all..be free

James B. Earley

## **Songs...The Angels Sing**

Wondering why they ever met  
Was it chance or fate  
Doubts and fears..should they not  
The circumstance...contemplate

Thinking things through..might it be  
That life has made the choice  
..And songs..they hear...the Angels sing  
Are sounds of Destiny's voice

Crying out from somewhere..just beyond  
The horizon of right and wrong  
Harvest the fruit lying in the fields  
..Where the seeds of fate..are sown

James B. Earley

## Stolen Moments

So far away...on an autumn's day  
And yet...so near they were  
Two woven lives...two souls in love  
With many dreams...to share

...Memories.....fueled.....emotions  
Linger.....poignant...in their hearts  
Painfully....they lay....and visit  
Intimate....though..a world apart

Once again.....they'll fall together  
At...some future...time...and place  
Unrestrained...desire...erupting  
In a passion.....filled.....embrace

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

So....long..the day.....so...short..the hour  
Stolen.....moments....angst.....deceit  
.....Another....night....so..long...the hour  
Stolen moments.....bittersweet

James B. Earley

## Sultry Summer's Evening

A frail...old Negro lady  
...Born...in Lincoln's day  
Who knew the taste of freedom  
Only... when... she passed ...away

Imprisoned... by the hatred  
Which gnawed... within her soul  
Agony written upon her face  
... From the story...that she told

Of a sultry.....summer's evening  
She was but...a child...back when  
Her sister...was dragged away...in the dark  
...By a group of sullen men

On horseback...silhouetted  
Against...a glazed...moonlight  
...And White folk...until her dying day  
Reminded her...of...the night

When the cabin...in the clearing  
Where the slaves called home  
Was violated and desecrated  
As she stood there...all alone

In the yard...and wept  
...And silently...prayed  
A vigil...with a purpose  
Through the night...she stayed

Returning late...the next morning  
.....Of a sweltering day  
They heaved a box...where she stood  
... Without a word...rode away

...Though...they disappeared...forever...  
Yet...their faces plagued her mind  
...There...beside...her sister's body...  
Lying in the box...

.....They made  
.....Of pine

Dedicated to my paternal grandmother, Sallie Virgie Earley 1855 -1948.....who was born into 'Slavery'...during...the 'American Holocaust, ' witnessed this moment...as a young child, and was consumed with a bitter hatred as a result of the experience. 'Sultry Summer's Evening' is a tribute to her memory....with the prayer...that she has...in death...found that measure of peace...which was so tragically elusive....during her sojourn.....on this earth.

James B. Earley

## **The Atheist..And Me**

Peculiar.....hearing  
..An atheist.....pray...  
Disabled.....plane  
.....In.....disarray...

And.....he chimed  
.....Right.....in...  
As.....I bowed  
.....To pray

James B. Earley

## **The Kidnapped Child**

Though....they are with you  
.....Yet....they're alone  
Frightened....and longing  
For surroundings they've known  
.....Send them on home

To loved ones.....awaiting  
.....Loved ones.....deprived  
Of an answer...to the question  
Is.....my child.....alive  
.....Send them on home

Time...keeps dragging  
.....Seconds.....to years  
Siblings.....and parents  
Living..the tears  
.....Send them on home

.....To the happiness  
And laughter..once...they knew  
If there is....any decency  
....Left ever.....in you  
.....Then....

Send them on home

James B. Earley

## **The Obama Presidency**

.....'Hope'  
.....That fragile thread  
.....We cling  
.....Humanity's plight  
.....A worthy resolution bring  
...This fervent....prayer  
.....I plead  
.....I sing

Author's note:

To....its source of inspiration.....the poet....Tai Chi Italy....and the  
poem....'Hope'.....thanks!

James B. Earley

**'USArian'.....I am**

Continents of heritage  
Africa.....just one  
Varied such blood lines  
Of cultures they've come

This land conceived  
Miscegenation has bred  
A modern genealogy  
Apprehensive the tread

A new race of mankind  
Only yesterday born  
Historically no lineage  
That strength to lean on

Once they were Negroes  
Then Black they became  
Decades of frustration  
In search of a name

America by birthright  
This USA...their land  
A soul of that soil  
USArian....I am

James B. Earley

## **Virgin Trail**

The path of life  
A complex way  
No beacons there  
...No footprints say

Beware the perils  
Of the virgin trail  
No point of reference  
....No maps to tell

Of a sanctuary  
Should the need arise  
That haven of refuge  
Where threatened skies

Intense the journey  
....Hazy at times  
Yet..through the murk  
A joy we find

For we discover  
As we travel on  
Not once are we ever  
....On the road....alone

James B. Earley

## **'Weapons of Mass Destruction'.....Defined**

Bagdad's...Brogans

\*  
\*  
\*

.....size-10

James B. Earley

**Why**

.....When rocks

.....Are thrown

.....Our way

.....Maliciously

.....Thrown

.....Only

.....'Our way'

\*

\*

\*

\*.....Should we not

\*

\*

.....Examine

\*

\*

\*.....The

.....Reasons

.....WHY

James B. Earley

## Why Not.....John McCain

.....If  
Nelson Mandela  
.....Found....  
'Solitary confinement'  
...A  
Presidential qualifier  
  
...Then  
  
.....Why  
  
.....Not  
  
.....John McCain

Author's Note:

Ah....the dialogue provoking atmosphere of poetry!

1. The poet Al Ramos...(comment below) posed an interesting question 'If we fail in our mission, does that qualify us as heroes? '
2. Poet Dorothy A. Holmes' commentary...intuitively grasps the poem's intent....emphatically characterizing...its critical distinction!

James B. Earley

## Winery Nights

Author's Note:

.....A whimsical moment with 'Welcome'.....the musing sculpture  
adorning the manicured landscape...at...Robert Mondavi Winery  
....Napa Valley.....Oakville California.

\*  
\*  
\*

Discreet...within the Winery grounds  
.....a legendary scene unfolds  
the statue...'Welcome'...somehow transformed  
.....at once.....became.....a living soul

Stealing away from her pedestal base  
On a darkened night she roamed  
...throughout the width and breadth  
of this...her Oakville vineyard home

There was a rustling amongst the vines  
as she moved swiftly through  
plucking the grapes....the very best  
...for only the best would do

And so she squeezed from the fruit...  
a bit of the juice and supped  
then satisfied...resumed her pose  
...before the morning sun came up

Winery nights are silent now  
...until crushing time again  
when shadows will find her scurrying about  
...bringing the harvest in

Visitors...from around the world  
...come sip...savor...and sigh...  
others are drawn to walk the grounds  
...never knowing...the reason...why

Author's note:

.....Imagine.....a fervent voice.....resonating deep within  
the recesses.....of that.....'Great Celestial Vineyard, '....  
proclaiming...to the Universe...'I am....Robert Mondavi  
.....and I approve.....this message! '

James B. Earley

## **Wondrous Words**

A life.....chock-full.....and few regrets  
.....Untold.....blessings.....mounting...  
At last...I learned.....to live.....again  
.....Twenty.....some years.....and counting

Author's note -

Dedicated....to Destiny - for I know....of no other name....to call it! The poem addresses a spiritually defining chapter in my life....one..where I found...an inner peace...a contentment...I never thought possible. Its words.....a poignant reflection of the moment!

James B. Earley

## Yesterday's Hour

As fate would have it...I called your name  
The afternoon....I know...so vividly  
A Sunday....awash.....in September sun  
...Yet....shadows.....shroud...the memory

You were somewhat....a stranger then  
...Someone I barely knew  
Before the night had claimed the day  
An old friend I'd found in you

Choosing not to advise or counsel  
Nor make judgmental calls  
Instead you simply lent an ear  
...And.....listened...to it all

Touching were the gestures shown  
.....So noble were the signs  
Operator please...you said  
Place the charges....on my line

Often I visit that Autumn's day  
Often I see the painful scene  
Often I think so kindly of you  
...And....what...a friendship means

There is I know....a guiding light  
As sure as the day...tomorrow  
Which showed the way to friendship's door  
In yesterday's hour...of sorrow

Author's note:

With....appreciation...to.....Bonnie Hunt  
.....the stranger.....who became...my friend!

James B. Earley